

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

Fifth Series,
Volume XVI.

No. 1690.—November 4, 1876.

{ From Beginning,
Vol. CXXXI.

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PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY
LITTELL & GAY, BOSTON.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

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PRIMAVERA.

THE spring has passed this way. Look !
where she trod
The daring crocus sprang up through the sod
To greet her coming with glad heedlessness,
Scarce waiting to put on its leafy dress,
But bright and bold in its brave nakedness.
And further on — mark ! — on this gentle rise
She must have paused, for frail anemones
Are trembling to the wind, couched low among
These fresh green grasses, that so lush have
sprung

O'er the hid runnel, that with tinkling tongue
Babbles its secret troubles. Here she stopped
A longer while, and on this grassy sweep,
While pensively she lingered, see ! she dropped
This knot of lovesick violets from her breast,
Which, as she threw them down, she must
have kissed,
For still the fragrance of her breath they keep.
And look ! here too her floating robes have
brushed,
Where suddenly these almond-branches flushed
To greet her, and in blossoms burst as she
Swept by them — gladsomely and gracefully.

Where is she now ? Gone ! Vain it were to
try
To overtake her. Here, then, let us lie
On this green bank and weave a wreath, and
sing
From our full hearts the joyous praise of
spring,
Grateful for these dear gifts she left behind —
The flowers, the grass, the soft and odorous
wind,
The lingering effluence, the subtle grace
That still, though she has vanished, haunts
the place.

Pursuit is vain ; for she, like all things fair,
Will not be hunted down into her lair,
And caught and prisoned. Let us, not be
rude,
Nor seek into her presence to intrude,
But praise her in the distance. Then, per-
chance,
She may not flee away with wingèd feet,
But pause and backward cast a favoring
glance,
And waft a fragrance to us rare and sweet.
Too eager, we our present joy may miss
In the vain chase of an imagined bliss ;
The ideal joy no human hand can seize,
The dream that lures us and before us flees.

The day is passing. Let us own its spell ;
And as these trees, feeling within them swell
The blind, dim stirring of the spring, express
In leaves and blossoms their mute thankful-
ness,
So, grateful, let us take what nature gives ;
Love be our blossoms — gentle thoughts our
leaves.

Blackwood's Magazine.

W. W. S.

FORGIVENESS.

O God, forgive the years and years
Of worldly pride and hopes and fears ;
Forgive, and blot them from thy book,
The sins on which I mourn to look.

Forgive the lack of service done
For thee, thro' life, from life begun ;
Forgive the vain desires to be
All else but that desired by thee.

Forgive the love of human praise,
The first false step in crooked ways,
The choice of evil and the night,
The heart close shut against the light.

Forgive the love that could endure
No cost to bless the sad and poor ;
Forgive, and give me grace to see
The life laid down in love for me.

Transcript.

AUGUST ON THE MOUNTAINS.

THERE is sultry gloom on the mountain's brow
And a sultry glow beneath ;
Oh, for a breeze from the western sea,
Soft and reviving, sweet and free,
Over the shadowless hill and lea,
Over the barren heath.

There are clouds and darkness around God's
ways,
And the noon of life grows hot ;
And though his faithfulness standeth fast
As the mighty mountains, a shroud is cast
Over the glory, solemn and vast,
Veiling, but changing it not.

Send a sweet breeze from thy sea, O Lord,
From thy deep, deep sea of love ;
Though it lift not the veil from the cloudy
height,
Let the brow grow cool and the footstep light,
As it comes with holy and soothing might,
Like the wing of a snowy dove.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

THE YEARS.

WHY do we heap huge mounds of years,
Before us and behind,
And scorn the little days that pass
Like angels on the wind ?

Each, turning round a small, sweet face
As beautiful as near,
Because it is so small a face
We will not see it clear.

And so it turns from us, and goes
Away in sad disdain ;
Though we could give our lives for it,
It never comes again.

MISS MULOCK.

From The Contemporary Review.

FRENCH PREACHERS.

I.

THE French are the least poetical nation in Europe. They have neither the exuberant idealism of the north, nor the enthusiastic realism of the south. A brave, brilliant race, with a temperament of great contrasts, and an energy all but fatal in its restlessness, they are deficient in at least two qualities, without which there can be no truly great poetry—in earnestness and in repose. And their very language lends itself with difficulty to express the feelings of imagination. It has neither majestic strength nor ravishing sweetness; it is singularly poor in “cord of sweet sounds;” it has no music—it does not “sing.”

But the gods have not left themselves without a witness. France is the land of rhetoric; the French are a nation of rhetoricians. Rhetoric reigns supreme, for good or for evil, in every department, from the highest to the lowest. Its authority is unquestioned; Church and State bow before it; truth itself makes it now and then a humble courtesy. You may object that it teaches men to value expression above thought, to devote their chiefest energies to the study of the “how,” to sacrifice, if necessary, everything to form; but you cannot do away with the fact that it is in admirable harmony with the temper of the people. Hence it has met with a ready response; and the language is now no longer pressed into a reluctant service; it yields itself gladly. Where shall we find a match for the marvellous prose of France? where shall we look for another Montaigne or a Voltaire?

This national rhetorical tendency, with which the Frenchman is born, shows itself as much in the Church as in the world. The history of the pulpit in France is in reality the history of rhetoric in the Church. Church oratory is but one of the departments of *belles-lettres*. The unfortunate Protestant preacher has to leave nature behind him whenever he steps across the threshold of the temple of grace. Deeply imbued with the notion of the sanctity of his function, he takes

care to remove as far as possible from him all that savors of the wicked world, and his very thoughts are clothed in the *patois* of Canaan. Not so the French Catholic preacher. The arms of the statesman in the political assembly, the weapon of the lawyer before the judicial tribunal, the power of the *littérateur* with his motley audience, are transferred to the pulpits of the Church. The theme may be different; the method remains the same. Oh, happy land, where nature is not yet excluded from her pulpits!

The natural love for rhetoric finds itself strengthened by the Catholic Church, which, so far from looking upon it as an invasion, uses all its influence to promote it. The atmosphere of Catholicism is favorable to the cultivation of the aesthetic, for two reasons. First of all, the preacher is the mouthpiece of a faith, fixed in the cardinal points, and in the minutest details, and supported by all the authority and strength of an unbroken, united tradition. He asks no questions—blessed are they that ask none—he “only believes,” as the Evangelicals would say. This repose of faith leaves him, as a matter of course, time to devote himself to the development of outward graces. The substance is secured; he can now turn himself to the study of the form.

But the position of the Protestant preacher is altogether different. Whilst the strength of Catholicism lies in affirmation, the force of Protestantism is the grandeur of negation. Its climax is that sublime scene, when the brave Martin Luther defies the world gathered at Worms. Its basis is the right of the individual, its banner is the banner of unfettered criticism; its history, if true to itself, will therefore be a continual conflict, and its only consolation the mournful yet hopeful “I cannot do otherwise, God help me.” Consumed by the love of truth, and never pausing in its search after it—here is grand and sombre poetry—it gladly leaves vestments, and flowers, and forms, as an amiable weakness, to women and children.

In the second place, Catholicism has ever appealed to the latent poetry of humanity. A faith which does not appeal to

the imagination is doomed; for what else is religion but the highest form of poetry? The want of it was at first unfelt in Protestantism, for, as we remarked on a former occasion,* it was a great moral outburst, and its leaders were religious geniuses and heroes. But the Protestantism of later days resembles the perplexed king of Israel in the famous representation of the judgment. Whither shall it turn — to the right or to the left? But it is too weak to be a religion, and too strong to be a philosophical school.

One may disapprove of the view which Catholicism has taken of art or of the method which it has adopted in regard to it. The distinction between "sacred" and "secular" is in our eyes intensely immoral. To us the music of Offenbach is as sacred as that of Bach; to us the introduction of theology into art is an unpardonable sin. But no one can deny the soundness of the principle of Catholicism or cease to remember the debt of gratitude which we owe to it. The Catholic Church has bound together aesthetics and Christianity. She has attempted to give expression to the religious sentiment, which would otherwise have been condemned to silence; she has imparted to the religious life color and harmony. The many voices of the inner life of adoration have found a tongue in her rites and forms; the heart of humanity, wearied and saddened by the realities of life, has found in her ideals an imperishable source of rest and consolation.†

Under the twofold influence, therefore, of natural proclivity and of the encouragement of the Church, has the rhetorical element made its power felt in the pulpit. Nor is there any reason why the rhetorical method should not succeed as much as any other. We are unable to look to the Old Testament as our guide, for alas! our preachers are in no sense of the word prophets. We cannot follow the example of the apostles, for they preached no sermons and limited themselves to the procla-

mation of certain facts with which we are familiar, thanks to those articles *de luxe* — the creeds of Christendom. Moreover, the Shemitic ideas of interpretation are not ours. It is true we cannot accept implicitly, as our master, a Cicero or a Demosthenes. As Herder has wittily remarked: "There is no Philippus at our gates, and we are not called upon either to condemn or to acquit a notorious criminal." Who ever dreamt of anything after a sermon except of going home? But a sermon, being intended to keep alive and stir up within us the ideal temper, is as likely, if not more so, to gain its end by adopting a classical model as by following a Hebrew inspiration. At any rate, we shall now glance at the history of the pulpit, and see what it has become in the hands of succeeding rhetoricians.

II.

THE Catholic pulpit before the days of Bossuet has only a few names which deserve to be recorded. It was the misfortune of the preachers of the age of Louis XIII. to be succeeded by the three greatest preachers of French Catholicism. But, had it been otherwise, it is far from certain that their fame would have been greater or more lasting than it has proved to be. In fact, their chief title to recognition is simply that they preceded Bossuet.

The Renaissance which, like the spirit of the Lord, had gone forth to break the fetters of unhallowed tradition and tyrannical authority, had had but little influence on the Church. The Church is in all ages conservative *quand-même*; in her eyes a thing is good simply because it exists. She generally looks upon what is new with suspicion if not with aversion, and, in nine cases out of ten, when she utters a word in favor of progress, we may be sure that, like Pilate, she says it not of herself, but that another has told her.

Scholasticism, though it had killed every atom of life in the Church,* still lingered

* "The Protestant Pulpit in Germany," *Contemporary Review* for August, 1874.

† I do not forget that the real cause of the hostility of Protestantism to art is to be looked for in its peculiar method of solving the dualism on which all religion is founded.

* It is almost superfluous to state that my remarks apply to scholasticism in general. Had the Middle Ages produced none other but the author of the "Imitation," that masterpiece of egotism — but all religion

behind, not merely in those cells of the cloister, where it had held undisputed sway for ages, but in the Church, in the pulpit, where it had celebrated so oft its barren triumphs. Its principle was indeed too invaluable to be given up. Its fundamental idea was, that there is but *one* truth, so that a thing, when theologically true, must be also philosophically true, and *vice versa*, and that this *one* truth is to be found in the traditional dogma of the Catholic Church. This deification of the stereotype in matter and also in form had indeed made of the Church a vast graveyard. But, unlike the Greek hero, she preferred reigning over the dead to wandering in the midst of the living, at the risk of being nothing more than a fellow-laborer working together with others for the great common good.

Whilst, therefore, there was on all hands a general revival, and France, under one of her greatest kings — great because he was the concentration of the national virtues and vices and follies — Francis I., was rapidly becoming one of the civilizing centres of the world, the Church continued in a state of stagnation. The beautiful gods of Hellas, under whose tranquil reign joys had been great, and sorrows, though not unknown, had pressed but lightly, had dethroned the stern, sombre, violent God of mediævalism. And the world breathed once more freely, and felt like one who, waking from a terrible dream, finds himself still in the heyday of youth with life before him. But the Church remained in that past over whose grave the world had sung its *Te Deum*. Its form of teaching was undoubtedly somewhat changed; as in the days of Philo Plato and Moses walked hand in hand, so now the Greeks and the Hebrews appeared together. But the substance was altogether unchanged, and the form of the discourse, because of the want of assimilation, resembled oft the coat of the unfortunate Joseph — beautiful, I dare say, but withal with too many patches.

The Renaissance, translated in the dialect of the Church, is nothing more than

is egoistical — or the noble thinker and martyr Abelard, it would have been impossible to say that they had been devoid either of religious or of intellectual life.

scholasticism with a slight gloss. The celebrated preachers of the reign of Henri IV., such as Segurian and Coton, are in reality nothing else but disguised scholastics. Even Francis de Sales, one of the most popular and most successful preachers of the day — it is said that he made about seventy-two thousand converts — is no exception to the general rule. His devotional writings have all the charms of a childlike spirit and a poetical temper. They display a richness of observation and a knowledge of the human heart such as one might expect of a man whose skill in the *direction des âmes* was unparalleled. They are also marked by a tenderness which, however passionate, never transgresses certain bounds, so that one feels no doubt about the safety of his spiritual wives. There is, lastly, a freshness of language which, by way of contrast with other productions of a similar kind, is singularly refreshing. But, whenever he ascends the pulpit, a complete change comes over him. His sermons abound in far-fetched allegories, treating the Bible as if it were a book of conundrums; long, dry explanations, tending more to the glorification of the "particle" than to the glory of God; curiously grotesque images, more productive of a smile than of a feeling of devotion. How shall we explain this falling-off? Is it because the pulpit is enthralled by some evil spell, or because the tyranny of fashion is nowhere more powerful and more successful than in the precincts of the Church?

But Francis de Sales contributed indirectly to the reformation of the pulpit, for he was one of the great leaders of the religious revival in the Catholic Church of France during the seventeenth century. Protestantism had rendered to the Church the services of a parliamentary opposition. It had been the misfortune of the Church to have reigned for centuries with well-nigh undisputed authority; it had been her sad fate to proclaim a truth all but unquestioned. Now, though nature may safely be left to its infinite developments, it would seem that the moral world, when thrown completely on its own resources, falls sooner or later into a state of atrophy. And as for truth, every truth being at the

same time true and false, it is incomplete without its contrary part. Truth ever includes an affirmation and a negation. There is but one great heresy, *i.e.*, to imagine that a *part* of the truth is *the* truth.

The dying Roman Church was roused into active life by Protestantism. This I consider an undeniable fact. But at no period of her history did she manifest more clearly her hidden vitality and her apparently inexhaustible resources of piety and of energy. When in the seventeenth century Protestantism, forsaking its original moral foundation, exhibited not-to-be-mistaken signs of weakness, Catholicism was once more full to the brim of life and vigor.

The Council of Trent had been a great logical folly. Francis de Sales and Vincent de Paul had an inspiration which was worth a thousand councils. The tendency of the Western Church, as distinguished from the speculative Eastern Church, had always been of a practical nature. These two men, true children of their Church, used therefore all their energies to stir up the latent life of the Church. Starting from the principle that "knowledge without virtue and virtue without knowledge are insufficient;" they insisted upon mental cultivation and moral reformation, as both equally indispensable to the priesthood.* They then founded schools, sent out mission-priests, covered the land with monasteries, and, above all, gave to the world that greatest glory of Catholicism—among the many incarnations of the divine one of the chiefest—the sister of charity.

The religious atmosphere being thus gradually purified, it is certain that its influence will at last be felt by the pulpit. The pulpit has never originated any religious movement, strange to say; it has contented itself with following in the wake and gathering up the fragments. The good results of the revival are to some extent perceived at once. Take, as an instance, the sermons of le Père le Jeune, one of the priests of the Oratory. They are simple and practical; it is impossible to say of them "that they aim at nothing and that they hit it." The preacher looks upon his audience as grown-up children to be catechised for the time being with more or less severity. There is a gentle firmness in everything he says, and an air of reality about his utterances so as to make one believe that the preacher is in the first place a man, and in the second

place a theologian. No doubt all this is not what we understand by "eloquence;" but is it not a good thing that for the first time during many centuries the pulpit should have as its occupant a man and not a scholastic?

Or look at the sermons of the Jesuit De Lingendes, written in Latin before they were delivered. He wears the garment of a *doctor ecclésiae*, his reasonings and discussions are oft protracted to an inordinate length. But under the garment of the logician beats a passionate heart. Père le Jeune at his very best has a dead perfection; he has no *verve*, no inspiration. But Claude Lingendes has that holy spirit, the absence of which is death. His morality has none of those subtleties attributed to his order. It is simple, austere, naked, —not bedecked so as to excite the admiration of children and of monkeys. It makes vivid, passionate, nay, violent appeals to the audience. The great preacher must be almost tyrannical. The prophets, the greatest religious orators of the world, were men of violence; they built their morality chiefly on fear. Thus it was that they fell, but thus it was also that they had reigned for centuries in the face of a threefold opposition: the throne, the priesthood, and the majority of the nation.

We are still a long way from Bossuet, Bourdaloue, and Massillon; we have seen, however, some of the "missing links."

It is interesting to note the contrast between the Catholic and the Protestant preachers of the period. How different the tone, which breathes through the sermons of Pierre du Moulin, or Jean Mestrezat, or Jean Daillé. The Protestants are clad from head to foot in a theological armor. They spend all their energies in the exposition and the defence of a theological dogma. They cling to the letter of the Scriptures, guarding it with a lover-like jealousy, which, to say the least, is somewhat exacting. Their sermons are merely detailed explanations of their text, a custom, however, which has as much *raison d'être* as the modern fashion of speaking about everything except about the text. Unfortunately their literalism is mostly extreme, and their text says never anything but yea and amen to their theological system.

If in the contents of their sermons they offer a theological analysis, supposed to be founded on the Scriptures, the form in which they express their convictions is even less attractive. The style is as bare as their temples; devoid of imagery and ornament and every artistic element. It

* "La science à un prêtre, c'est le huitième sacrement de la hiérarchie de l'Eglise." —*Francis de Sales.*

is sombre, hard, oft bitter. It bears all the traces of pressure and haste; it does not make the faintest attempt to be rhetorical, for it would probably have looked upon oratory as a snare of the devil.

But let us do justice to those disciples of Calvin, the sternest of the Reformers, whom the strange chapter of accidents had thrown amongst a people, with great *religious instincts*, but without a *conscience*. The gloom of their faith was deepened by their lives, which were equally stern and sad. That dogma which they preached contained, in their eyes, the question of "to be or not to be," and they had the courage to suffer in its defence. It inspired them during a life of action, and sustained them amidst the horrors of the galleys, the weariness of exile, and the terrors of persecution. And if their style had not a Ciceronian polish, shall we blame them? It was manly, vigorous, oft heroic. There was eloquence after all in that man, standing in all simplicity before his audience, in a temple not made with hands, taking up his Bible, over whose pages he had pored in prayer and wept in silence, and speaking from the fulness of a God-loving heart, to a crowd which, before the shadows of evening had fallen, might number some of its members among "the noble army of martyrs."

But if the eloquence of the preachers of Protestantism was to be found above all in those obscure, holy, active, stormy, suffering lives, it can proudly point to the name of Jacques Saurin, as a proof that it had no inherent incapability of producing an orator. Saurin is the Protestant Bos-suet. The son of a distinguished family at Nîmes, he spent his youth at Geneva. Thoroughly indoctrinated in the tenets of Calvinism, he came to London, where he became the minister of a French church. From England he went to Holland, where the martyrs of philosophy and of theology had found a welcome asylum, and it was at the Hague that he celebrated his oratorical triumphs.

He had all the outward qualifications, which, it is true, do not make an orator, but without which success is rarely obtained. His appearance was imposing, his voice was sonorous, and his delivery was so fascinating that one of his hearers, after having listened to him for the first time, exclaimed, "Was it an angel that spoke, or a man?" His sermons were long; he preached never less than an hour and a half, but in those days the length of sermons was not measured by time, but

by the interest of the subject and of the method of its treatment.

The chasm between Saurin and his predecessors, and, we are compelled to add, his successors also, is very wide. The circumstances under which he delivered his discourses were favorable. Far removed from the din of theological polemics, in the possession of complete liberty, and surrounded by a fashionable sympathetic audience, he had few barriers to his eloquence. But he was more than eloquent, he was an orator.

Protestantism till then, at its very best, had been eloquent. But it had moved in a very narrow circle, identifying Christianity with a theological formula, and forgetting, in its zeal for Christianity, that religion of Jesus which is as much above dogma as the sun is above the earth. Within that limited space, every inch of which it had contested with a tenacity worthy of a better cause, it had served as a guide to its adherents, taking them again and again over the well-beaten track. But it was getting monotonous; and in religion, as in everything else, one ought to be careful to avoid *ennui*. Its atmosphere, too, was somewhat stifling, and religion cannot flourish without fresh air.

Saurin's first merit was that he enlarged the horizon of Protestantism. The choice of his subjects is of the most varied description. He roams through heaven and earth, especially through the former. He is taken up too much, no doubt, with theological questions; but apart from the fact that he was fond of metaphysical subtleties, and skilled in the intricacies of dialectics, theology will always be paramount in a system which is based on a theological proposition: the free sovereignty of God, graciously electing a few and kindly damning the many.

But Saurin often deigns to be human. Then he leaves the dogma to take care of itself, and chooses a moral topic, bearing upon life, with its every-day struggles and trials. On these occasions he evinces both in his descriptions (he had a remarkable dramatic power) and in his direct applications and appeals, great breadth of view combined with a practical temper. The one keeps him from losing himself in details; the other prevents him from confining himself to generalities.

The divisions of his sermons are for the greater part very ingenious. He pours a wealth of learning on his subject, which even then fatigued the audience, and which in our days — days of the deification of

shallowness and of mediocrity — would be considered as perfectly appalling. There is at times something overwhelming about him; but he always gives one the idea of being possessed of an immense power to be wielded at his good pleasure. As to his style, it is at all times transparent and simple.

But how shall we impress our readers with the idea of his oratorical power? His printed sermons manifest a richness of thought, a power of imagination, and a force of expression, which must at all times command admiration. But we must go to his contemporaries to know what he really was. If it be the characteristic of a religious orator to rouse his audience from "moral stupidity" to moral consciousness, to stir up within them the dormant religious sentiment, to force them, by some mysterious power peculiar to himself, to contemplate themselves and their lives in the presence of the ideal, and to humiliate themselves before it — if it be the mark of a great orator that he knows how to make himself gradually master of the soul of his hearer, to make it think, and feel, and live with him for the time, however much it may be opposed to him when the spell is broken — if it be, in short, the badge of the orator to wield power, to make the truth live before his hearer and reign within him — then Saurin is an orator, and only next to the three great preachers of Catholicism.

III.

At last came Bossuet.

He came in an age when the world was exhausted. The great sixteenth century, which had given birth to the Renaissance and to the Reformation, was followed by a period of rest; and rest for humanity is retrogression. Great individualities, great characters, great conceptions, great instincts, belonged to the past. Nature with its spontaneity was giving place to art and the artificial.

Louis XIV., like another Augustus, had no greatness, except the power of appreciating it in others, and the desire to concentrate it around him. He gathered the illustrious men together, and proclaimed himself the centre of authority and of unity. In accordance with this idea he persecuted Protestantism, Port Royal, and the Papacy, and put himself forward as the defender of the liberties of the Gallican Church. There was no power to resist him, for though the *Reformation* had brought to light the *individual*, the

Revolution was still to come, which should make known the *people*.

There is but one Louis XIV., and Bossuet is his prophet. Bossuet was the apostle of absolutism in every form, only now and then modified, as at one time he was more under the influence of the Jesuits, and at another more under the influence of the king. His ideal was the theocracy, his political creed was the *droit divin* carried to its utmost limits. His religion was one of affirmation and authority. Doubt was unknown to him. With majestic mien and calm countenance, and surrounded by the pageantry which befits a pompous age, the religion of the Bishop of Meaux presented itself to his contemporaries.

A theocratic religion, in harmony with the State, as concentrated in and interpreted by Louis XIV., this is the great fundamental thought of Bossuet. It is the key-note, at any rate so it appears to us, of his many and varied writings; it makes itself heard also in those wonderful sermons, which began with the brilliant improvisations of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, and ended sixty years later in the quiet and comparative obscurity of a country church.

The sermons of Bossuet do not come before us like his funeral orations, which were written and revised by himself. But though without the master's finishing touch, they have all the characteristics of his other productions.

A glance at his predecessors convinced us of the little progress which pulpit oratory had made. Bossuet, not able to learn much from those immediately before him, turned to the original sources. He made himself a complete master of that petrified thought which is but another word for tradition. No one read the Fathers as he did; but what is more to the point, no one either before or after him knew how to use them as he did. His special study, however, was the Old Testament. Isaiah, and above all the unknown author of the second part of his book, so majestic and so sublime; Jeremiah, with his intense pathos; Ezekiel, with his gorgeous coloring; the author of the Book of Daniel, with his philosophical power; in short, all these men without parallel as lyrical poets, interpreters of the heart and prophets of the conscience, become models to the young preacher reading and meditating in the silence of his cell. And verily the mantle of one of those religious geniuses of Hebrew history fell upon him; Bossuet was an eastern echo on Western shores.

The subject of his sermons was principally the theological dogma. This was in accordance with his absolute tendencies. Morality holds but a subordinate place in his teaching; it oft blends skilfully with his theology, but it always remains somewhat in the background, never offers anything striking, and rarely descends into details.* The prominent bringing forward of the theological dogma is detrimental to morality. The man who is moral in obedience to an external authority, with some ulterior end in view, either of gain or of loss, is, in our eyes, not yet moral; his morality rests on an immoral foundation. Morality finds its great authority and sanction in the gospel written long before all others: the gospel of the conscience. But, whether or no, one thing is certain, that the triumph of Bossuet as preacher of the theological dogma is much greater than if he had been a preacher of morality. To inspire life into the latter requires talent; to make the former live is the work of genius.

And where shall we find the majesty of the Church's doctrine if not in Bossuet? I do not now refer to the kingly splendor of his style, the perfection of form which has never been equalled, or to the dignity of his office which has left its mark on every page. The developments of Catholicism had been altogether external; in the hands of Bossuet, the very heart of the dogma is laid bare. We see its hidden centre in the sublimity of its grandeur and the depth of its tenderness. Tenderness—it was forced upon Bossuet by the study of the Old Testament. It is a strange fancy which looks upon the God of Israel as cruel and vindictive. The God of the Old Testament is full of love. And no wonder, for Jewish theology is throughout anthropomorphic.

The genius of Bossuet made of the theological dogma a living reality. His audience could hardly follow him as he soared to heights on which few had ventured; they were dazzled by the variety, the strength, and the skill of his arguments; they were overwhelmed by a force, great at all times, greatest perhaps when it confessed his weakness; they were humbled, if not crushed, by the great problems which were set before them as demanding

* It should be remarked that Bossuet had to contend with great difficulties. The age was theological but irreligious—an age of priests and of mistresses. Bossuet has been blamed for his want of boldness: as a matter of fact he was bolder than others. The rudeness of John the Baptist—"It is not lawful," etc.—would have been sadly out of place in the polite age of Louis XIV.

a solution, and the vigorous demonstration of the weakness and the insufficiency of reason to supply the answer. But they were never allowed to forget that there was a way of escape, nay, more, that there was a path which, when trodden, would bring certainty and rest. It was the Catholic dogma, venerable because of its antiquity, fascinating because of the vitality with which the orator knew how to endow it. Here was the anchor in the midst of uncertainty; the remedy against every ill; the stay in the hour of weakness.

And as men listened to that wonderful inspiration which held them captive, however unwilling, some believed, others doubted, others again trembled. But upon all came that feeling of awe with which Jacob, rising from his dream at the brook of Jabbok, exclaimed, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

The funeral orations of Bossuet are as inferior to his sermons as art is to nature. The latter are a spontaneous outburst, the former are a work of reflection. They bear, as a matter of course, the impress of Bossuet's genius; they are full of grand thoughts couched in the sublimest of dictions. Nowhere, except in the prophets, are the glories of the Divine celebrated in more jubilant strains, or the miseries of humanity, in the midst of its greatness and dignity, described with more sorrowful accents. But the literary merits of these discourses are open to many strictures, and their tone is that of the polished courtier, who dexterously avoids an unpleasant topic; and, when unable to do so any longer, knows skilfully how to turn a reproach into a disguised flattery.

However, in this *genre* as in everything else, Bossuet is *facile princeps*. Compare his funeral orations with those of the preachers who stand foremost in the second rank—Fléchier and Mascaron. Fléchier was a great rhetorician, and his funeral orations, especially the one on Turenne, contain passages of great beauty. Mascaron also was a celebrated preacher, and known chiefly by his funeral orations. But how artificial is the atmosphere into which they usher us! The language is elegant, the words are well chosen, the harmony of the periods is admirable. We are inclined to forget for the moment the poverty of thought, and to be carried away by the richness of the garment which hides it from our view. But I forget who it was that said, "*L'éloquence continue ennuie.*" Ere long those high-sounding phrases grow wearisome; that flowery style, mistaken for poetry, palls upon us;

those well-meaning commonplaces irritate us ; that long-continued strain of flattery gets fulsome.

Oh, over the grave let there be silence ! But, if there must be speech, let it be the voice of nature,— majestic and meek, violent and tender, stern and consoling, sad and joyful; but in all her varying moods, simple, real, truthful. Chant on our graves thy requiem, thou whose lullaby has so often soothed us !

Bossuet occupies a unique place in the history of the pulpit; Bourdaloue, the inheritor of its old traditions, was in reality its reformer.

The contrast between the Bishop of Meaux and his successful rival, the Jesuit Bourdaloue, is very striking. Bossuet is original in his method of treating the dogmas. It is true he neither adds to nor takes from it; his excessive caution and common sense keep him from indulging in any extremes and from presenting it to his hearers in any but the orthodox form. But within the Church's limit he gives full scope to his power. He places the dogma in a relation to life which it had never yet had; he finds a way and creates a language to express it, and to make its power felt. Bourdaloue's method, on the other hand, is the old one marked with the stamp of centuries. Thanks to the age in which he lives, it is free from bad taste, pedantry, and the defects which had characterized it in the preceding age. The originality of Bourdaloue consists in the subjects which form the matter of his discourses. He returns to those fields from which the doctors of the Church should never have strayed. Can we doubt for a moment what is the legitimate province of the pulpit? Judaism was a theology, Christianity is morality.

His sermons are a complete manual of religious morality. He had a thorough knowledge of men by means of that splendid spiritual dissecting-room, the confessional. A knowledge of humanity is indeed independent of a knowledge of men. The observation of men is not necessary in order to understand humanity; nay, being generally partial, is rather detrimental than otherwise to that wider and more general knowledge. But the confessional enables every priest, unendowed though he may be with powers of abstraction or of imagination, to obtain a practical knowledge of the conscience; whilst the Protestant clergyman, with the sorry substitutes of visiting or of marriage,* flounders hope-

lessly, the Catholic priest stands on *terra firma*. The ordinary priests of the Catholic Church are not more eloquent as a rule than our Protestant curates. Universal eloquence would indeed be an unmixed calamity. But they display an astounding knowledge of the human heart. Who that has stood in a little country church and listened to the discourse of the simple village priest, has not felt constrained to say, "This man may not be eloquent, but he knows the people"?

A plain, practical, every-day morality is, I must allow, somewhat tedious; but every-day life is tiresome, and it is useless to complain of it. It is useful, though not very beautiful; as we all know, "*Rien n'est beau que l'inutile.*" It suits the majority, who are quite satisfied with the possession of five senses, and care little for that sixth sense without which it were better not to have been born—the sense of the ideal. It comforts the weak souls, which have got so used to crutches that they have forgotten how to walk. It has the merit of leaving few disturbing elements behind it, for who ever applied a moral description or precept to any one else save his neighbor?*

The method of Bourdaloue was that of the scholastics. His logical powers were unrivalled. He had the faculty of grasping his subject as a whole, and of mastering it into the very minutest details. He was a master in clearness of exposition. His subject was carefully laid out in a certain number of parts; each part contained a number of propositions, with divisions in which the matter under discussion was thoroughly ventilated, the arguments in favor of it enforced, and the objections to it refuted. It would be easy to point out an occasional excess of subtlety, a want of directness, a failure of progressiveness; but it is enough for our purpose to point out the method. Morality in a logical garb reduced to scientific formulas and appealing to reason—such is the strange spectacle which the preacher Bourdaloue presents to us.

It has been said that he had no imagination, and that he was dry and barren. In my opinion he is to be commended for the faithfulness with which he adhered to his method. The logic of the pulpit must be either scientific or rhetorical; it must be the

tion of a limited class of the people; and, as to marriage, does any clergyman ever make a study of his wife?

* I am only speaking of a certain kind of morality; not of the morality which, as I conceive, it should be the subject of the pulpit.

* Visiting reaches at the very best but a small por-

logic of the schools or that of the people. It may be said that the former is, at its best, too impersonal; that it is unsafe and provokes opposition, nay, possibly defeat. Good and well; let it be discarded.

But I think we should object most strenuously to the mixture of two different methods of argumentation — to the sermon which, after a train of reasoning, suddenly breaks off at a moment favorable to the preacher and rushes into a torrent of feeling, where it remains or whence it emerges again at the bidding of the preacher. Such sermons may be highly applauded by the faithful; but the world outside the chosen people will say to the minister, "If you put yourself on the standpoint of reason, come then, let us reason together; if you put yourself on the point of view of the religious sentiment, come then, let us compare souls." Bourdaloue, honest and straightforward, having adopted the method of the dialectician, remained faithful to it, and reached a standard of perfection never surpassed. And being beside an adept in gentlemanly satire and skilled in religious gossip, he succeeded in gaining the ear of the people. Audiences thronged round him, and acknowledged his power, returning homeward convinced if not persuaded.

The voice of Bossuet was no longer heard, and the utterances of Bourdaloue were few and far between, when, a young disciple of the Oratory, Massillon made his first appearance. A great age, which had been ushered in amidst shouts of joy, was drawing to a close amidst bursts of tears. Not merely because of political misfortunes. The rotteness and hollowness of the *régime*, was chiefly seen in the collapse of society. Autocrats keep their subjects in peace by pursuing a vigorous foreign policy. Thus their attention is drawn away from affairs at home, and no attempt is made to penetrate beneath the more or less gilded surface. But a defeat abroad involves a greater defeat at home. The tinsel, glitter, and polish being removed, there remains a material which, whatever it may be, is far from sound. Society which, during the brilliant years of Louis XIV., had revealed little of its corruption to the looker-on, or at any rate had impressed him with the idea that its vices and virtues were both splendid, was suddenly seen in its hideousness. The intrigues and sensuality, in short the immoral atmosphere in which Louis XV. lived and breathed, was the result. So great was the corruption that even taste and good manners deteriorated rapidly;

the former, because, though not dependent on the morality of the individual, it is the outcome of the general atmosphere; the latter, because society had been polite but not civil.

It has been said that the decay of pulpit oratory began with Massillon. The accusation is unjust. A gentle, Jeremiah-like nature, he coped boldly with the difficulties by which he was on all sides surrounded. His style, like that of the prophet, shows traces of literary decline. In both there is a want of ideas, a monotonous repetition of the same pictures and images; an excessive abundance of words, a seeming richness of style which is in truth but disguised poverty. But there are no traces of falling-off in Massillon when we look at the treatment of his subject. The choice of his theme in itself was masterly, it was the religious sentiment. The age, as we have seen, was immoral. In addition, a philosophy had sprung up which told man to study nature around him and within. Massillon, discarding the dogma with great wisdom, and avoiding a practical, detailed morality, went to the root of the matter, when he tried to show that human nature, closely interrogated, reveals the existence of a religious sentiment, and that its voice, when truly interpreted, proclaims in favor of virtue.

Massillon then placed himself on those serene heights of the religious sentiment where divisions and distinctions fade away like morning mists, and where men meet, in virtue of a common humanity, to give expression to a faith which shall interpret the feelings by which they all are inspired. He appealed to fear, to veneration, to admiration, to sorrow and joy, to love — in one word, to all that could stir up a sentiment which, denied by scepticism and trampled upon by vice, rises from its knees in moments when man's spirit is lonely and his heart is sad, and mutters in his ears, unwilling as they may be to hear: "*Eppure si muove.*"

Massillon's sermons abound in pictures. He delighted in word-painting, and was oft carried away by it. His love of antitheses is extreme, and there is a want of breadth about them which is decidedly disappointing. One feels that a few bold strokes would have been more efficient than the most detailed portrayal. On the other hand, some of those tableaux are highly effective. What glowing descriptions of the righteous and his death! What terrible pictures of the life and the condition of the wicked! Is it difficult

to imagine that as the preacher proceeded there rose from the heart of one of his hearers the prayer of the old prophet: "Let my soul die the death of the righteous"?

Massillon is fond of removing objections. It is to be feared that the ingenuity of the preacher oft suggests to the hearer some excuse or obstacle he had not thought of before. But if it be true that "the heart is desperately wicked and deceitful," it follows that it is most unwilling to love the highest, even when it is seen. It is well, therefore, to remove any real or seeming hindrances. The great orator must engage in a struggle with his audience. He has to fight, not for the victory of the truth—for it has conquered and goes on conquering—but for the acknowledgment of that victory and submission to it.

At other times Massillon, after having painted a certain moral condition in harmony with, or opposition to, the religious sentiment, points out the causes of which it is the result or the motives by which it is determined. Sometimes he dwells prominently on the effects produced by certain states, and draws from those and other characteristics a conclusion as to whether such a condition be desirable or no. He speaks at all times as if the question affected him personally, hence that temper of humility and of sadness which but rarely gives place to moderate joy.

It has been objected that his ideal was too high. An ideal which is too lofty deters the timid, drives those that are conscientious to despair, and produces in the indifferent a gay or melancholy recklessness. But it must not be forgotten that the majority of the audience are only too ready to lower the ideal which has been set before them, and to detract from the force of the preacher's words. Christianity has a very high ideal, and, though it would probably have chosen a lower standard had its conceptions been Hellenistic instead of being Shemitic, the fact remains that its ideal is one of the highest. In lessening it, in bringing it down to the level of the carnal, the selfish, or the ignorant, what shall we gain? Men are not won by concessions; they despise them as an avowal of weakness: they are won by those who know how to command. Or shall we abate its claims out of despair because the ideal has not yet been reached? The Christian religion is not a *fait accompli*; it is a religion which grows. A Christian is not he who believes in certain theories—that were seeking the liv-

ing among the dead; he is one who works out the principles which Jesus taught—the truths which are everlasting because they are the truths of the conscience. Shall there not be progress in this, as in everything else?

Bossuet, the preacher of dogma, appealing to the conscience; Bourdaloue, the preacher of morality, addressing himself to reason; Massillon, the interpreter of the religious instinct, speaking to the heart: a Church which has had three men like these is immortal.

IV.

THE eighteenth century was the child of the sixteenth. The leaders of great movements are generally unconscious of the real nature of the work in which they are engaged, and the gods, in pity for humanity—for what great work would otherwise have been carried out?—keep from them the knowledge of the consequences to which the principles which they lay down, with childlike frankness, must inevitably lead. There arises, therefore, sometimes a little confusion in the paternal relationship; and children, who appear very unlike their father, have in truth a perfect right to call him by that or any other endearing name. Thus Evangelicalism and Rationalism are both children of the Continental Reformation: the one, of the Reformation as practically understood or misunderstood by its authors; the other, of the Reformation as it was laid down in principle and in method.*

The eighteenth century was the protest of humanity against the State religion, and the attempted usurpation of the theocracy. The age of Louis XIV. had had an artificial religion. A State religion is the best substitute yet invented for no religion. It secures to religion a certain amount of stability and of respectability, and, above all, keeps it within certain limits. That religion, however, had had its day, and at the time of which we are speaking the subject which occupied the minds of men was morality.

The Thors of the age take up their hammer and shatter into atoms a religion which is in every way external. They are great in nothing but negation; but every negation is an affirmation. Unfortunately they go too far, or rather not far enough. In preaching an irreligious morality, in teaching man that his end is in himself, and that the end of society is in man, in

* In the English Church, e.g., a High-Churchman is the historical, a Broad-Churchman the logical, child of the Reformation.

thus carefully eliminating every divine and theocratic element, they keep out of sight the most intimate depths of human nature, and fail to penetrate to the ultimate principles which rule the world. Their punishment overtakes them: whilst they have rendered humanity never-to-be-forgotten services in protesting against hierarchy, in gathering up the fragments of true religion, in proclaiming the gospel of humanity, they failed in the ideal which they had set before them—the restoration of human nature—and ended, like their opponents (such is the irony of history), in establishing a despotism, and in promoting an order of things which, being merely external, was at its best a superficial morality and at its worst a glaring immorality.

The preachers of that period were in an unfortunate position. The pulpit had run through its three great phases, and seemed condemned to remain *in statu quo*, unless some great original force should unexpectedly come to its aid. This, however, was not the case. During the most revolutionary period in the world's history, the Church was for the greater part asleep. The few that were awake tried to make way against wind and waves by making use of the instruments which had formerly proved successful. In vain—the new order of things required to be met in a new way.

But some sank even lower: they fell to the level of the times and of the society whose guides they were supposed to be. The pulpit must indeed be of the world, but it must be at the same time above the world. The morality of the age became the theme of many a pulpit, and religion was made to play the part of a humble servant. The preachers were, it need scarcely be remarked, less enlightened than their rivals, and were opposed in the secret of their heart, though they might think it safer not to express their hatred, to the popular movement which was going on in their midst. For want of intellectual originality and moral sympathy, there remained therefore one thing: to display a force of character which should have secured respect if not sympathy. But they laid their head quietly on the lap of Delilah, and enjoyed it amazingly no doubt, till the Philistines, who had always suspected and hated them, came upon them in full force and led them away captives. They had attempted to be something between a priest and a man; the people, which detests halfness, rose against them and swept them away.

Among the preachers of the day, Poulle

and Neuville were the most popular. Poulle's fame rests chiefly on two charity sermons. Endowed with a lively imagination, and possessing a poetical style, it would be unfair to deny that there are passages in his discourses which go far to justify the public opinion. Neuville was chiefly known for his funeral orations. But his sermons, as judged by the standard of the times, are not without beauty. The style may be here and there too florid, or the tone savor now and then of pedantry—let us remember that we are in the day of small mercies, and “for these and all other mercies, may the Lord make us truly thankful!”

It would be easy to point to other names, such as Lenfant, on whom the mantle of Bourdaloue seemed to have fallen, master as he was of that direct argumentation in which the great preacher of Louis XIV. had been paramount; or the versatile Maury, a brilliant panegyrist and political orator, reviving by his eloquence classical days. Or one might call attention to the many excellent pastorals and charges issued by the bishops in times when the horizon wore a most threatening aspect. Or one might recall to memory some of the philosophical productions of the day, such as the works of Guenard, and, to pass on to days somewhat later, those of Boyer.

But such a catalogue of names, however interesting in the sense of completeness, would be, after all, dreary. The names and the works of those men, excellent as they were, are forgotten. Time never forgets what is worth remembering; if they perished it is because they did not deserve to live.

“Eighteenth century, thou callest thyself a philosophical age; how fatal thou shalt be in the history of the mind and of morality! We do not dispute the progress of thy knowledge, but could not the weak and proud reason of man control itself? Having succeeded in reforming ancient abuses, must it needs attack truth itself? . . . Revolution, thou art more fatal than the heresies which have changed the character of many surrounding countries; they left, at any rate, a worship and a morality behind them. But our unfortunate descendants shall be without either. Oh, holy Gallican Church! oh, Christian kingdom! . God of our fathers, have mercy on their children!”

Thus spoke a known preacher of the day—De Beauvais, Bishop of Senez, in his funeral oration on Louis XV., a *genre* of eloquence in which he had only one

rival, the Abbé de Boismont. A gentle, moderate man, doing quietly his work in the Church, and, after the manner of many ecclesiastics of the times, a member of the political assembly, he had one of those moments of inspiration — or shall I call it intuition? — which come now and then, let us trust, to the man who earnestly and sincerely loves the truth. The storm of the French Revolution broke out at last over the Church and the nation. The year 1790 saw the last public ordination before the Revolution. In a few years the Church will be deprived of her temples, her altars desecrated, and her priests martyred. Ere long the flocks will be without pastors, the living without guidance, the dying without consolation; and on the ruins irreligion and anarchy will celebrate their triumph, but a victory which is a defeat — the goddess of reason in the form of a handsome prostitute!

Then men will cry out for a religion. In epochs of national calamity, the people, which ever connects suffering and guilt, rushes to the altars to endeavor to appease the gods. Touching avowal of human weakness, the most sublime confession of human strength! But a religion cannot be created at command; a religious faith is not the work of a generous caprice or of a passionate impulse.

A Church, however, can be re-established by authority. On Easter Day, A.D. 1802, the celebrated Boisgelin, archbishop of Tours, preached a sermon in Notre Dame, on the re-establishment of religion.

V.

THE period upon which we now enter has none of the majestic repose which was the outcome of the revival at the close of the sixteenth century, or of the undignified sleep from which the Church of the eighteenth century had been roused so ungentlely by the iron hand of revolution. The spirit of restlessness characteristic of our times — days when the multitude of ideas keeps men in continued suspense, and prevents them from ever coming to a conclusion — penetrates even into that Church whose loudest boast is that she is the mouthpiece of an unbroken tradition, a fixed dogma, and an infallible authority.

The Concordat, which Napoleon had concluded as a stroke of policy, threatened that spirit of independence and of nationality which had been characteristic of the Gallican Church in her golden age. Gallicanism, though anxious to live in an *entente cordiale* with the Papacy, had always protested against the usurpation of

the Italian element in the Catholic Church, and refused to be nothing but a vassal of Rome. Its clergy, too, had always had a leaning towards that form of Broad-Churchism which had been associated with Port-Royal. It had hated Ultramontanism as a foreign importation, and cultivated a Christianity of an enlightened nature and with moderate tendencies. Traditions such as these could not easily be effaced and never be completely obliterated. They continued to linger behind, and to find now and then an eloquent expression; but as years rolled on their influence became weaker and weaker, till at last it grew all but imperceptible.

The Restoration, however, was more destructive of the Church than the Empire. It identified the Church with a political party; it made of religion a political tool. When the Church is narrowed to the limits of a party, either religious or political, it ceases to be. It answers to its description only when it includes all parties and is above them all. The Church of the Restoration lent itself to the governmental theories of absolutism. Ultramontanism, though a religious absolutism in its extremest form, might have gained adherents. Who has not known hours of moral weariness, of spiritual tossings to and fro, when a man, in his passionate longing for rest, would sell his soul, if need be, to obtain it? And where is rest for humanity except in one or other extreme? But, identifying itself with a political party, Ultramontanism gained momentary strength and lost in the end; for it stirred up the political animosities of men who would have looked upon it with indifference from a religious point of view. The result was that its altars were once more overthrown, and that it had again the glories of martyrdom. But after all it may have gained; for, leaving the next world out of the question, there is nothing, even in this one, which has its reward like martyrdom.

Ultramontanism then and political absolutism effect an entrance, at the beginning of this century, in the Gallican Church. They are set forth as a metaphysical theory by Bonald, in whose eyes a limited monarchy is an abomination, and to whom the theocracy is the only legitimate form of government. They are defended by the paradoxical De Maistre, who hurls his thunderbolts against the age, finding the one remedy against the ills which he paints with the sombrest colors, in the death of Gallicanism and the supremacy of the pope. They find an

enthusiastic advocate at first in Lamenais, one of those characters whose life must needs be full of change and of tragedy, because their morbid idealism makes them believe in a future which can never be realized, and their whole-hearted nature, incapable of a *juste milieu*, or of any state bordering on halfness, drives them on with a passion which, like a fatal fire, burns and consumes, leaving nothing behind but ashes.

But the struggle which will soon divide men, and range them in opposing camps, is delayed for a brief moment. The voice of a poet, whose brilliant imagination casts a magical spell over all it comes in contact with, vibrates through the length and breadth of France. The poet paints Catholicism in all its splendor; its saints and ideals rise before the eyes of men in all their majesty and grandeur; the rites and ceremonies of its worship appeal to them in all their solemn pomp and stately glory. To a Protestant the "*Génie du Christianisme*" seems to offer a Christianity without backbone. He will complain of the enervating effect of the atmosphere; he will probably, from his common-sense point of view, accuse the book of sentimentalism. But religion and Catholicism appeal to the uncommon sense of man. I do not, indeed, deny the weakness of the romantic Christianity of Chateaubriand; I do not deny the dangers of a religion which is exclusively the development of the sense of the beautiful. But the "*Génie du Christianisme*" in bringing forward the aesthetic aspects of Christianity, in pointing out to men the beauties of those undying traditions and immortal recollections whose halo had grown pale and whose brilliancy had been dimmed, taught men at any rate to contemplate the ideal and to adore. Adoration is not necessarily prayer, but it may lead to it; the acknowledgment of the beauty of the ideal does not necessarily compel submission, but it is the only way to it.

Frayssinous was the great preacher of the Restoration, who endeavored to make the doctrine of absolutism popular among the masses. He began his ministry at the Carmelite church in Paris, and was the first to give a series of "conferences." He was a firm royalist and loyal Ultramontane. The pope was to him the centre of Catholicism; and the supremacy of the Catholic Church was in his eyes paramount both in the spiritual and in the political domain. In conjunction with Charles X. he did all he could to secure

the authority of the Jesuits. He fell a victim to his zeal, and died in obscurity.

As the chief originator of *conférences sur la défense du Christianisme*, he deserves a special mention. The "conference" is neither a sermon nor an essay; it is a religious oration. Evangelicalism, which sums up the gospel in a theological formula of St. Paul, has virtually abdicated in favor of the pulpit of Protestant countries—the press. But the gospel of Catholicism is wide enough to embrace everything. Theology, metaphysics, moral philosophy, physical sciences, political economy, in short, everything which belongs to human science or human life, is laid under contribution by the Catholic preacher. This had always been the wise policy of the Roman Church. But how astonished would the great preachers of the seventeenth century feel if they could enter the Notre Dame of to-day! What variety in the choice of subjects, what diversity of method in their treatment!

The defence of Christianity in most of the "conferences" is of a peculiar nature. The historical and critical school, the glorious fruit of German Protestantism, had shaken the very foundations of orthodoxy. The shock, though specially felt in a neighboring camp, was too great not to produce vibrations elsewhere. The origin of the dogma was laid bare; its history and necessary development were clearly and firmly traced. Who could henceforth attach any absolute value to a dogma, when he remembered its birth and progress?

The Catholic preacher generally avoids the question. As a rule he has not had the thorough training of Protestantism, and he would probably find it a difficult matter to meet in detail the objections of Rationalism. But apart from this, the Church resembles a woman who begins to reason. She may or may not be lost, but she has left the safer platform of mild obstinacy for a dangerous parley with the enemy. The Catholic preacher knows how to be silent; his Church has reduced silence to a science. Marvellous and unsurpassed as is the eloquence of the Roman Church, its silence is more astonishing still. The audacity of its silence is sublime; it does not affirm, it gives no denials, it simply ignores.

The Catholic preacher leaves the dogma untouched; it is a *fait accompli*: we all know the power of facts. For the greater part he carries the war into the enemy's country; he shows his greatest brilliancy in attack and not in defence. But he

knows, if necessary, how to maintain his cause. Avoiding as much as possible historical and critical questions, he entrenches himself within the stronghold of the conscience. He points out the moral aspects of religious truths; he exhibits them in their bearing on political, social, and individual life. Sometimes he gives nothing more than a brilliant exposition and defense of a spiritualistic philosophy, or a powerful justification of his principles from the events of the day and the conditions of life. Thus he gains a twofold object. The masses of the people judge by results; they willingly believe in the truth of a principle, if its use has been demonstrated. The philosopher, who knows that the *belief* in a reality is quite as powerful for good or for evil, whether that reality have an *objective existence or no*, can have no objection to a preacher stirring up a faith productive of good, so long as he passes by the truth of the object to be believed in.

From the days of Frayssinous to the present time the great preachers of Catholicism have continued to hold "conferences." The traditions of the Church have found representatives in Ravignan, discussing the dogma with perilous subtlety and denouncing sternly the tendencies of modern times, yet withal carrying his audience before him by the combined power of a logical method and an ascetic life; in Dupanloup, the eloquent advocate of education, passionate apologist of Christianity as a safeguard against anarchy, and, above all, violent defender of the Papacy, compelling admiration from friends and foes by the exhibition of extraordinary versatility, unusual skill and brilliancy in debate, and unmistakable enthusiasm; in Père Felix, to mention only one other name, who boldly attacked modern criticism, in "*Jésus-Christ et la Critique Nouvelle*," and the world of to-day in his "*Conférences sur le Progrès par le Christianisme*." A semi-theological, philosophical mind, he discussed the *questions brûlantes* with comparative moderation, declaring himself in favor of progress—progress in faith, humility, holiness, and love.

But, however distinguished the preachers of tradition may have been, what were they when put next to the leaders of the small band, which may be called the Broad-Church party of French Catholicism? The disciples of Lamennais, differing widely in many respects, had one thing in common; they were *francs-tireurs* engaged in a holy warfare. In the conflict

between authority without liberty and liberty without authority, they wished to find a formula of reconciliation. They desired to show to the world that it was possible to be a good Catholic and a good Liberal; that the principles of Catholicism and of modern civilization were not in themselves antagonistic. Noble endeavor, in which to fail was glorious, in which to conquer was to be immortal!

Three men stood out prominently from among the rest—Gratry, Lacordaire, and Hyacinthe.

Gratry preached in the chapel of the Oratory; he was chiefly known as a writer. One evening, he tells us, when he was a young man, he had a dream. Life was stretched out before him, and as he looked down along its vista he saw honor, fame, love. But suddenly the dream vanished, and he was left alone. In the midst of a peaceful existence, given up to contemplation, he felt a void which demanded to be filled. Then religion revealed itself to him.

So much is certain, that this man was an enthusiastic priest all his life. "If there were twelve men," he said, on one occasion, "absolutely bent on doing God's will, and ready to proclaim it even unto death, they would usher in a new epoch in the world's history." But the priest's heart beat warmly for the world, for the age in which he lived. With all his idealism he had the passion of the reality, which he tried to understand and to love. Saddened as his heart must have been, vibrating to every human voice around him, disappointed as he must have felt when loyal aspirations were misunderstood or failed to meet with a response, he never despaired of humanity, for he never ceased to believe in God. "One thing astonishes me," he said, "it is to see Christians despairing of the world and of its progress on the way to justice."

But let us leave the brilliant philosopher, strange mixture of mysticism and of algebra, so subtle, so imaginative, so passionate, and pass on to Lacordaire.

We know his life. A young man describing himself in after days as one whose eyes had been bandaged, whose bandage gradually falling away reveals to him glimpses of light, till being removed altogether, he finds himself face to face with the sun, the voice of Lamennais calls him from the dream of unbelief and of freedom to the supposed realities of faith and of liberty. With his friend he hails the Revolution of July as the dawn of a better day, when religion, freed from the chains of

State, shall reign in spiritual supremacy and celebrate its triumph in a liberated hierarchy. As a priest, he will raise the dogma to a place of honor, by striking off its fetters; as a Liberal, he will attempt to reconcile Democracy and Catholicism. In the midst of his high ambitions he hears the voice of censure from Rome. He submits, and whilst remaining an "impenitent Liberal" became a "penitent Catholic."

His career as an orator reached its climax in the conferences of the Notre Dame. The domain where the preacher loved to dwell was the borderland of religion and philosophy. In that wide, somewhat vague region between heaven and earth, the preacher breathed freely, never forgetting, when he soared to the clouds, the earth which he had left behind; ever remembering, when he stood on the ground, the sky which stretched out above him. One time he invoked philosophy, then he appealed to history, now he came forward as the preacher of a wide morality, discussing those general principles which should be the theme of the pulpit and not merely enumerating duties; then he discussed questions which belonged specially to Christianity, now he became the interpreter of society, of the individual in his doubts, struggles, aspirations, then he made heard the voice of the Church, of that divine authority which will guide men amidst the bewilderments of life and lead them to the haven where they would fain be.

Artist, philosopher, poet, religious thinker, liberal politician, Christian—all these met in Lacordaire. His generalizations were often dangerous; his knowledge was not profound enough, and his imagination carried him away; his logic was frequently at fault, swayed as it was more by sentiment than by reason; his historical views were often partial, for they stood under the influence of a dogma, or at any rate of an *a priori* idea; his political theories were often visionary and inconsistent, but what a problem—to be consistent as a Catholic and as a Liberal! his social views were often too theoretical and too subtle; his diction, in fine, was sometimes too pompous; but notwithstanding all these criticisms, and many more which it would be easy to bring forward, Lacordaire was the greatest orator of Catholicism since the days of Bossuet, and his *conférences*, both in subjects and in method, in my opinion, the nearest approach to the realization of the ideal of Christian eloquence.

Look at the grand majestic style, free from all mannerism, the affectation of would-be great men! It is the reflection of a lofty individuality; it is worthy of the exalted ideas which it has to convey. There are no artificial tricks, no unnecessary phrases, no straining after an effect; the grandeur and beauties of the style, which is subservient to thought, produce not merely a literary effect, they stir up feelings and emotions which lead men to inquire what subject is capable of inspiring an eloquence like this. Or think of the boldness of the preacher, his flights of imagination and depths of passion. Unlike Chateaubriand, his magic wand does not content itself with calling from the dead a bygone world; a splendid painter of the past, as he shows himself to be, he directs his chieftest efforts to present the Church and the world of to-day in their poetry and beauty. And whilst his imagination opens up to men the horizon of the ideal, he throws himself, so to speak, upon his audience. His firm hand sweeps across the strings of their hearts—hearts which, it may be, had not vibrated to any touch since the days when the little child knelt at his mother's knee—and the silent strings, which seemed doomed to break without so much as a sigh, break forth once more into music.

For this passionate Dominican, in his picturesque garb, is very human. He knows what it is to wrestle, to weep, to suffer, to pray, to triumph, to rejoice; he knows what is to fear, to hope, to believe, to love; he understands what it is to be "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; to be perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." His wounds are now healed, but the scars remain. Hence, "who is weak, and he is not weak? who is offended, and he burns not?" His experience makes him gentle, full of tenderness and of sympathy; let others preach damnation, he will proclaim salvation; let others command, he is willing to beseech men. And the result is, that dazzled as men are by the marvels of his imagination and carried away by his poetry, they continue to hear, when the effects of these have passed away, that "still small voice" which murmurs in broken accents of a "paradise lost" to point to a "paradise regained."

There seemed no limits to his sympathy. In his wide treatment of the great general questions which he invariably discussed, and to which the pulpit should chiefly confine itself, he showed an ardent

desire to understand his age and to sympathize with it. Striking the key-note that Christianity is the foundation on which the life of societies and of individuals must be built, and endeavoring to show in every way, with a zeal worthy of a better cause, that the rock on which the world is to rest, in order to ensure its safety and progress, is to be found in the doctrines of Catholicism, he was at the same time the enthusiastic defender of liberty, and the opponent of every form of despotism, either ecclesiastical or political. His eloquence brought the world to the Church's altar; it kept it there for a brief moment; was it possible to do more?

The religious tribune passed away; the Carmelite Hyacinthe succeeded him. His heroic eloquence, imaginative rather than scientific, bearing witness to his intellectual sympathies with and moral affinities to all that is best and noblest in modern science and life, was worthy of the pulpit which Lacordaire had made glorious. Père Hyacinthe, discussing at times the most abstruse questions of philosophy, as far as it is possible to do so before a mixed audience, did not shrink at others from bringing forward the political and social problems of the moment. In language, glowing not merely with a poetical fire or an ardent temperament, but with the warmth of an earnest conviction, he laid bare the wounds of society, that he might point out its remedy.

Suddenly his voice was silenced. Europe was moved by the spectacle of a soul in moral agony; it rang with the voice which raised the protest of the conscience. And when at last he was cast out it was felt that here was more than the loss of an orator. The last representative of Catholic Broad-Churchism had departed; Ultramontanism had triumphed.

VI.

MEANWHILE Protestantism had been revived at the end of the eighteenth century, and officially recognized by Napoleon I. Two influences were soon at work: the rationalistic spirit of the eighteenth century, and the Methodist revival, which under Scottish inspiration had originated in Switzerland, and from thence spread to France. The former found its preacher in Cocquerel, the latter in Adolphe Monod.

Both were men of great eloquence. Cocquerel preached in elegant language a gentle morality; he laid little stress on the dogmas, for to him practice seemed all-important; he loved truth, but he loved charity better. Monod, on the other hand,

proclaimed the theology of the Reformation. But he knew how to combine with it a deep knowledge of the human heart, a profound insight in life, a keenness of analysis and of observation, and, lastly, a mysticism, which bore golden fruits in those touching "*Adieux*," probably unsurpassed by any Protestant mystic. Protestantism has had no preacher like him since the days of Saurin. Fearless, earnest, without guile, with a touch of sadness, laying siege to the conscience with the weapons of terror, or with the entreaties of love, his words produced a powerful effect. The *chef d'œuvre* of his eloquence is probably his "*St. Paul*."

But the timid rationalism of Cocquerel was destined to give way to a rationalism more logical and more powerful. Dissatisfied with a theory which makes of the Holy Ghost a schoolmaster, and of apostles and evangelists a party of schoolboys, and which desires to make men bend before the authority of the Scriptures, which, from a Protestant point of view, can mean nothing else but the authority of Jones or of Brown as the case may be, the brilliant thinker Scherer raised the cry of liberty. And this was the origin of the famous Strasburg school, and of the movement in France of which the younger Cocquerel and Paschoud were distinguished representatives.

That school committed oft the great mistake of discussing questions of criticism and of history in the pulpits of the Church. It forgot that the atmosphere of the Church is one of faith, and not of science. Not satisfied with the knowledge that the facts of Christianity are facts of the religious consciousness, and that they are sometimes the allegorical embodiments of the highest moral truths, they occupied themselves with investigations as to whether these facts were historical, in the ordinary sense of the word, or no. Thus their teaching was oft vague and unsatisfying; it appeared to present to the hearers a religion *à la carte*. But religion, being for the many, must be definite. Great without contradiction are the Eleusinian mysteries, but only for the few.* Great also is "*Diana of the Ephesians*." Whoever without cause denies her greatness, whoever needlessly disturbs a little child in its innocent slumber, let him be anathema!

But whenever the distinction between faith and science was clearly grasped, when the preacher laid bare with psycho-

* φιλόσοφον πλήθος ἀδίνατον είναι. — *Plato*.

logical skill the depths of the human heart, when he tried to show the harmony of religious morality with all that is truest and best in human nature, when he held up the *ethical Christ* as a living perfection, and insisted on faith in him — that is, attachment to his person — can his words have been in vain?

The orthodoxy of Monod, if not superseded, was somewhat softened down by a modern Evangelical school. The distinguished and eloquent Edmond de Pres-sé is the chief leader of what might be called the right centre. Adhering to the principal doctrines of the Reformation, he acknowledges the rights of historical criticism and allows himself to be influenced by its results. Characteristic of him and his school is the frequent use of the psychological argument. Protestantism has here made a step in advance.

VII.

IN conclusion, it will be seen that France is divided once more into two opposite camps. Liberal Catholicism being silenced, there remains, on the one hand, Ultramontanism, reaping at present the fruits of a reaction, and unbelief more respectful, more in earnest, than in the days of Voltaire, and equally determined and destructive. Between the two extremes are the masses of the people, indifferent, gay, or sad, in accordance with the event of the hour, careless about anything beyond the present moment.

Never was the Roman Church more powerful, as an organization, than at present. Never was its hold stronger, notwithstanding appearances to the contrary. It has learnt nothing; it has anathematized its reformers, and cast out those who wished to bring it in harmony with the age. It stands forward in glaring opposition to modern civilization, but it continues to reign. Shall the storm, now heard faintly in the distance, once more sweep it from its moorings? shall it drift once more helpless on the sea of human passions, or shall it be able to hush into the silence of submission the cry which will otherwise sooner or later swell into the clamor of rebellion, and to ride safely at anchor in the midst of gathering gloom?

The triumph of Ultramontanism cannot be permanent; but when it falls what can replace that great Catholic Church which, notwithstanding its frequent crimes and sins, has a right to the gratitude of humanity and to a respectful farewell, as one which in ages past nobly fulfilled its mission? Can Protestantism? But what is a

Church without authority and without tradition? or a Church which embodies a compromise between Rome and Protestantism? The spirit of Truth answers, "Rome I know, and Geneva I know; but who are you?"

The thinker is no prophet, but he has no fears. On the ruins of Catholic and Protestant Churches he will chant no *Te Deum*, and still less a *Miserere*. He will turn to that East, which has given the world its religions; he will bow himself before the revelations of Shemitic genius. He knows that the principles of Jesus, admitting of indefinite development and infinite application, can never be surpassed; that, seated on the throne of the ideal, the Virgin's Son shall reign for ever. He knows that humanity is necessarily religious; that, however led astray for a time, its conscience will demand a religious morality, its pious sentiment long for an altar, and its artistic instincts cry out for a poetic ritual.

A. SCHWARTZ.

From The Cornhill Magazine.
CARITA.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE YOUNG PEOPLE.

CARA'S second evening at home was passed much more happily than the first, thanks to Mrs. Meredith, and her spirits rose in consequence; but next morning there ensued a fall, as was natural, in her spiritual barometer. She went to the window in the drawing-room when she was all alone, and gazed wistfully at as much as she could see of the step and entrance of the house next door. Did they mean her to "run in half-a-dozen times a day," as Mrs. Meredith had said? Cara had been brought up in her aunt's old-fashioned notions, with strenuous injunctions not "to make herself cheap," and to cultivate "a proper pride." She had often been told that running into sudden intimacy was foolish, and that a girl should be rather shy than eager about overtures of ordinary friendship. All these things restrained her, and her own disposition which favored all reserves. But she could not help going to the window and looking out wistfully. Only a wall between them! and how much more cheerful it was on the other side of that wall. Her heart beat as she saw Oswald

come out, not because it was Oswald — on the whole she would have preferred his mother ; but solitude ceased to be solitude when friendly figures thus appear, even outside. Oswald glanced up and saw her. He took off his hat — he paused — finally, he turned and came up the steps just underneath where she was standing. In another moment he came in, his hat in his hand, his face full of the brightness of the morning. Nurse showed him in with a sort of affectionate enthusiasm. "Here is Mr. Oswald, Miss Cara, come to see you."

The women servants were all the slaves of the handsome young fellow. Wherever he went he had that part of the community on his side.

"I came to see that you are not the worse for your dull dinner last evening," he said. "It used to be etiquette to ask for one's partner at a ball; how much more after a domestic evening. Have you a headache? were you very much bored? It is for my interest to know, that I may be able to make out whether you will come again."

"Were *you* bored that you ask me?" said Cara. "I was very happy."

"And, thanks to you, I was very happy," he said. "Clearly four are better company than three. Your father and my mother have their own kind of talking. Why I have not been in this room since I was a child; how much handsomer it is than ours! Come, Cara, tell me all about the pictures and the china. Of course you must be a little connoisseur. Should one say *connoisseuse*? I never know. *Virtuosa*, that is a prettier word, and we are all in the way of the cardinal virtues here."

"But I am not at all a *virtuosa*. I don't know. I was a child, too, when I used to be at home, and I suppose it hurts papa to come into this room. He has never been here since I came; never at all, I think, since mamma died."

"Does he leave you by yourself all the evening? what a shame!" said Oswald. "Is he so full of sentiment as that? One never knows people. Come, Cara, if that is the case, it is clear that I must spend the evenings with you."

Cara laughed frankly at the suggestion. She did not understand what he meant by a slight emphasis upon the pronouns, which seemed to point out some balance of duties. She said, "I have only been here for two evenings. The first was very dull. I had nothing to read but that book, and I was not happy. The second was last night. Oh, I am not accustomed to

much company. I can be quite happy by myself, when I am used to things."

"That means you don't want me," said Oswald, "but I shall come all the same. What is the book about? You don't mean to say you understand that! What is unconscious cerebration, Cara? Good heavens, how rash I have been! Are you an F.R.S. already, like the rest of your father's friends?"

"I don't know what it means," said Cara, "no more than I know about the china. But I read a chapter that first night; it was always something. You see there are very few books in this room. They have been taken away, I suppose. Nobody, except mamma, has ever lived here."

She gave a little shiver as she spoke, and looked wistfully round. Even in the morning, with the sunshine coming in, how still it was! Oswald thought he would like to break the china, and make a human noise, over the head of the father who was sitting below, making believe to think so much of the memory of his dead wife, and neglecting his living child. The young man had a grudge against the elder one, which gave an edge to his indignation.

"You shall have books," he said, "and company too, if you will have me, Cara: that will bring them to their senses," he added to himself in a half-laughing, half-angry undertone.

What did he mean? Cara had no idea. She laughed too, with a little color starting to her face, wondering what Aunt Charity would think if she knew that Oswald meant to spend his evenings with her. Cara herself did not see any harm in it, though she felt it was a joke, and could not be.

"You were going out," she said, "when you saw me at the window. Had you anything to do? for if you had you must not stay and waste your time with me."

"Why should I have anything to do?"

"I thought young men had," said Cara. "Of course I don't know very much about them. I know only the Burchells well; they are never allowed to come and talk in the morning. If it is Reginald, he always says he ought to be reading; and Roger, he is of course at work, you know."

"I don't know in the least," said Oswald; "but I should like to learn. What does this revelation of Rogers and Reginalds mean? I never supposed there were any such persons. I thought that Edward and myself were about the limit of friendship allowed to little Cara, and

here is a clan, a tribe. I forewarn you at once that I put myself in opposition to your Reginalds and Rogers. I dislike the gentlemen. I am glad to hear that they have no time to talk in the mornings. I, for my part, have plenty of time."

"Oh, you are not likely to know them," said Cara, laughing, "unless, indeed, Roger comes on Sundays, as he said. They are probably not so rich as you are. Their father is a clergyman and they have to work. I should like that myself better than doing nothing."

"That means," said Oswald, with great show of savagery, setting his teeth, "that you prefer the said Roger who must not talk o' mornings, to me, presumably not required to work? Know then, young lady, that I have as much need to work as your Roger; more, for I mean to be somebody. If I go in for the bar it is with the intention of being lord chancellor; and that wants work—work! such as would take the very breath away from your clergyman's sons, who probably intend to be mere clergymen, and drop into a fat living."

"Roger is an engineer," said Cara; "he is at the college; he walks about with chains, measuring. I don't know what is the good of it, but I suppose it is of some good. There are so many things," she added, with a sigh, "that one is obliged to take for granted. Some day, I suppose, he will have bridges and lighthouses to make. That one can understand—that would be worth doing."

"I hate Roger!" said Oswald. "I shall never believe in any lighthouses of his making; there will be a flaw in them. Do you remember the Eddystone, which came down ever so often? Roger's will tumble down. I know it. And when you have seen it topple over into the sea you shall come and see me tranquilly seated on the woolsack, and recant all your errors."

Upon which they both laughed—not that there was much wit in the suggestion, but they were both young, and the one lighted up the other with gay gleams of possible mirth.

"However," said Oswald, "that we may not throw that comparison to too remote a period, where do you think I was going? Talk of me as an idler, if you please. Does this look like idling?" He took from his pocket a little roll of paper, carefully folded, and breaking open the cover showed her a number of MS. pages, fairly copied out in graduated lines. Cara's

face grew crimson with sudden excitement.

"Poetry!" she said; but capital letters would scarcely convey all she meant. "Oswald, are you a poet?"

He laughed again, which jarred upon her feelings, for poetry (she felt) was not a thing to laugh at. "I write verses," he said; "that is idling—most people call it so, Cara, as well as you."

"But I would *never* call it so! Oh, Oswald, if there is anything in the world I care for—Read me some, will you? Oh, do read me something. There is nothing," cried Cara, her lips trembling, her eyes expanding, her whole figure swelling with a sigh of feeling, "nothing I care for so much. I would rather know a poet than a king!"

Upon this Oswald laughed again, and looked at her with kind admiration. His eyes glowed, but with a brotherly light. "You are a little enthusiast," he said. "I called you *virtuosa*, and you are one in the old-fashioned sense, for that is wider than bric-a-brac. Yes; I sometimes think I might be a poet if I had any one to inspire me, to keep me away from petty things. I am my mother's son, Cara. I like to please everybody, and that is not in favor of the highest pursuits. I want a muse. What if you were born to be my muse? You shall see some of the things that are printed," he added; "not these. I am more sure of them when they have attained the reality of print."

"Then they are printed?" Cara's eyes grew bigger and bigger, her interest grew to the height of enthusiasm. "How proud your mother must be, Oswald! I wonder she did not tell me. Does Edward write, too?"

"Edward!" cried the other with disdain; "a cloghopper; a plodding, steady, respectable fellow, who has passed for the civil service. Poetry would be more sadly in his way than it is in mine. Oh, yes, it is sadly in mine. My mother does not know much; but instead of being enthusiastic she is annoyed with what she does know. That is the kind of thing one has to meet with in this world," he said, with a sigh over his own troubles. "Sometimes there is one like you—one more generous, more capable of appreciating the things that do not pay—with some people the things that pay are everything. And poetry does not pay, Cara."

"I don't like you even to say so."

"Thanks for caring what I say; you have an eye for the ideal. I should like

to be set on a pedestal, and to have something better expected from me. That is how men are made, Cara. To know that some one — a creature like yourself — expects something, thinks us capable of something. I am talking sentiment," he said, with a laugh; "decidedly you are the muse I am looking for. On a good pedestal, with plenty of white muslin, there is not a Greek of them all would come up to you."

"I don't know what you mean, Oswald. Now you are laughing at me."

"Well, let us 'laugh,'" he said, putting his papers into his pocket again. "Are you coming to my mother's reception this afternoon? I hear you were there yesterday. What do you think of it? Was old Somerville there with his wig? He is the guardian angel; he comes to see that we all go on as we ought, and that no one goes too far. He does not approve of me. He writes to India about me that I will never be of much use in the world."

"To India?"

"Yes; all the information about us goes out there. Edward gives satisfaction, but not the rest of us. It is not easy to please people so far off who have not you to judge, but only your actions set down in black and white. Well, I suppose I must go now — my actions don't tell for much: 'Went into the house next door, and got a great deal of good from little Cara.' That would not count, you see; not even if I put down, 'Cheered up little Cara, who was mopish.' Might I say that?"

"Yes, indeed; you have cheered me up very much," said Cara, giving him her hand. Oswald stooped over her a moment, and the girl thought he was going to kiss her, which made her retreat a step backwards, her countenance flaming, and all the shy dignity and quick wrath of her age stirred into movement. But he only laughed and squeezed her hand, and ran down-stairs, his feet ringing young and light through the vacant house. Cara would have gone to the window and looked after him but for that — was it a threatening of a visionary kiss? How silly she was! Of course he did not mean anything of the kind. If he did, it was just as if she had been his sister, and Cara felt that her momentary alarm showed her own silliness, a girl that had never been used to anything. How much an only child lost by being an only child, she reflected gravely, sitting down after he left her by the fire. How pleasant it would have been to have a brother like Oswald. And if he should be a poet! But this ex-

cited Cara more when he was talking to her than after he was gone. He did not fall in with her ideas of the poet, who was a being of angelic type to her imagination, not a youth with laughter glancing from his eyes.

That evening Cara sat solitary after dinner, the pretty silver lamp lighted, with its white moon-orb of light upon the table by her; the fire burning just bright enough for company, for it still was not cold. She had said, timidly, "Shall you come up-stairs this evening, papa?" and had received a mildly evasive answer, and she thought about nine o'clock that she heard the hall-door shut, just as John came into the room with tea. She thought the man looked at her compassionately, but she would not question him. The room looked very pretty in the firelight and lamplight, with the little tray gleaming in all its brightness of china and silver, and the little white figure seated by the fire; but it was very lonely. She took up a book a little more interesting than the one which had been her first resource, but presently let it drop on her knee wondering and asking herself, would Oswald come? Perhaps he had forgotten; perhaps he had noticed her shrink when he went away, and, meaning nothing by his gesture, did not know why she had retreated from him; perhaps — But who could tell what might have stopped him? A boy was not like a girl — he might have been asked somewhere. He might have gone to the theatre. Perhaps he had a club, and was there among his friends. All this passed through her head as she sat with the book in her hand, holding it open on her knee. Then she began to read, and forgot for the minute; then suddenly the book dropped again, and she thought, with a sort of childish longing, of what might be going on next door, just on the other side of the wall, where everything was sure to be so cheerful. If she could only pierce that unkindly wall, and see through! That made her think of Pyramus and Thisbe, and she smiled, but soon grew grave again. Was this how she was to go on living — lonely all the evening through, her father seeking society somewhere else, she could not tell where? She thought of the drawing-room at the Hill, and her eyes grew wet; how they would miss her there! and here nobody wanted Cara. Her father, perhaps, might think it right that his child should live under his roof; but that was all he cared apparently. And was it to be always thus, and never change? At seventeen it is so natural to think that every-

thing that is, is unalterable and will never change. Then Cara, with a gulp, and a determination to be as happy as she could in the terrible circumstances, and, above all, to shun Oswald, who had not kept his word, opened her book again, and this time got into the story, which had been prefaced by various interludes of philosophizing, and remembered no more till nurse came to inquire if she did not mean to go to bed to-night. So the evening did not hang so heavy on her hands as she thought.

Next day Oswald came again, and told her of a forgotten engagement which he had been obliged to keep; and they chattered gaily as before; and he brought her some poems, printed in a magazine, which sounded beautiful when he read them, to her great delight, but did not seem so beautiful when she read them over herself, as she begged she might be allowed to do. After this there was a great deal of intercourse between the two houses, and Cara's life grew brighter. Now and then, it was true, she would be left to spend an evening alone; but she got other friends, and went to some parties with Mrs. Meredith, Oswald attending them. He was always about; he came and had long private talks with her, reading his verses and appealing to her sympathies and counsel; he walked with her when she went out with his mother; he was always by her side wherever they went. "I know Edward will cut me out when he comes, so I must make the running now," he said often, and Cara no longer wondered what making the running meant. She got so used to his presence that it seemed strange when he was not there.

"It's easy to see what that will end in," said nurse to John and cook in the kitchen.

"I wish as one could see what the other would end in," cook replied. But the household watched the two young people with proud delight, going to the window to look at them when they were out, and rejoicing over the handsome couple.

"I always said as our Miss Cara was one as would settle directly," her faithful attendant said. "Seventeen! it's too young, that is, for anything."

"But he haven't got a penny," said cook, who was more prudent, "and he don't do nothing. I'd like a man as could work for me, if I was Miss Cara."

"I'd like him better if he hadn't no call to work," said nurse, with true patrician feeling.

But the chief parties knew nothing of

these remarks. They were very cheerful and full of mutual confidences. Oswald confiding to Cara his doubts and difficulties, his aspirations (which were chiefly in verse) and light-hearted anticipations, not going so far as to be called hopes, of sitting one day on the woolsack. Cara, though she had a great respect for Oswald, did not think much about the woolsack. But it was astonishing how she got used to him, how she liked him, and, notwithstanding the occasional dull evenings, how much more variety seemed to have come into her life. Sometimes Mrs. Meredith herself would talk to the girl about her son.

"If he would work more steadily I should be happier, Cara," she would say; "and perhaps if he had a strong inducement he would work. He is so clever, and able to do what he likes."

Cara did not know about this; but she liked his lively company. They were the best of friends; they talked to each other of every foolish thing that comes into the heads of young people; but she had a vague idea that he did not talk to her as the others thought he did. He was not like Roger even; though Roger was no more like him than night was like day. Roger was — different. She could not have told how, and nobody knew of this difference nor spoke to her on the subject. And this life floated on very pleasantly, with more excitement than had existed in that placid school-girl life at the Hill. Miss Cherry came two or three times on a day's visit to her darling, and observed what was going on and was puzzled; but Aunt Charity had her first attack of bronchitis that year, and it was winter weather, not good for travelling.

"Yes, I think she is happy on the whole," was Miss Cherry's report to the elder aunt when she went home — which, as may be supposed, was not a clear enough deliverance for Aunt Charity.

"Is the young man in love with her?" said the old lady; "is she in love with him? James should not be such a fool as to let them be constantly together, unless it is a match that would please him."

"James is not thinking of anything of the kind," said Miss Cherry impatiently. "James is taken up with his own affairs, and he thinks Cara a little girl still."

"To be sure he does — that is where men always go wrong," said Aunt Charity, "and James will always be a fool to the end of the chapter."

Cherry winced at this, for she was the model of a good sister, and never had seen

any man who was so much her ideal as James — though in some things he was foolish, she was obliged to allow. Perhaps, as Aunt Charity was ill, and the house, as it were, shut up and given over to invalidism for the winter, it was as well that Cara should be away, getting some enjoyment of her young life. Had she been at home it would have been dull for her, for Miss Cherry was in almost constant attendance upon the old lady. Thus things had turned out very well, as they so often do, even when they look least promising. Had Cara been at the Hill, Miss Cherry would not have been so free to devote herself to Aunt Charity, and both the child and the old lady would have suffered. True, Miss Cherry's own life might have had a little additional brightness, but who thought of that? She did not herself, and you may be sure no one else did. It was altogether a fortunate arrangement, as things had turned out, and as for Cara, why, was there not Providence to watch over her, if her father was remiss? Miss Cherry felt that there was something like infidelity in the anxious desire she felt sometimes to go and help Providence in this delicate task.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE OLD PEOPLE.

WHEN Mrs. Beresford died, as has been described, there was a great flutter of talk and private discussion among all who knew her about the particulars of her death. It was "so sudden at the last," after giving every indication of turning out a lingering and slow malady, that public curiosity was very greatly excited on the subject. True, the talk was suppressed peremptorily by Mr. Maxwell whenever he came across it, charitably by other less authoritative judges; but it lingered, as was natural, and perhaps the bereaved husband did not have all that fulness of sympathy which generally attends so great a loss. There were many people, indeed, to whom it appeared that such a loss was worse even than a more simple and less mysterious one, and that the survivor was entitled to more instead of less pity; but mysterious circumstances always damp the public sympathy more or less, and people do not like to compromise themselves by kindness which might seem complicity or guilty knowledge, if in the course of time, anything not known at the moment should be found out. Thus James Beresford, though much pitied, did not meet with that warmth of personal sympathy which circumstances

like his so often call forth. He was not himself sensible of it indeed, being too miserable to take any notice of what was going on around him; but most of his friends were fully sensible of this fact, and aware that but few overtures of active kindness were made to the melancholy man, whose very abandonment of his home and life made another item in the mysterious indictment against him, of which everybody felt the burden yet nobody knew the rights. It was in these painful circumstances that Mrs. Meredith first formed the link which now associated her with her next-door neighbor. The first time he had come home after his wife's death, which was only for a week or two, the kind woman had met him, indeed had laid her simple, tender-hearted plan to meet him — going listlessly into his forsaken house. She had gone up to him, holding out her hand, her features all moved and quivering with feeling. "Won't you come in and sit with me in the evening?" she said. "It is the time one feels one's loneliness most — and my boys are away, Mr. Beresford." Her soft eyes, as she raised them to him, were full of tears; her look so pitiful, so full of fellow-feeling, that his heart was as much touched for her as hers seemed to be for him. Of all ways of consolation is there any so effective as that of leading those whom you grieve for to grieve also a little for you, as a fellow-sufferer? His heart was touched. He could not persuade himself to go the very first evening, but he came soon, and when he had come once returned again and again. It was the first new habit he formed after that mournful breaking-up of all his habits. He could not bear much at a time of the dismal place which he still called home; but now and then he was forced to be there, and when he came this new sweet habit gave him a little strength to meet the chaos into which his life otherwise was thrown. Did not Dante, too, get a little comfort from the sweet looks of that sympathizing woman who used to glance at him from her window after the lady of his heart was carried by the angels to heaven? There was no wrong to his Annie in that refuge which kindness made for him from the miseries of the world. Eventually it became a matter of course that he should seek that shelter. He went out of his own house and knocked at her door mechanically, and would sit by her, content only to be there, often saying little, getting himself softly healed and soothed, and made capable of taking up again the burden of his life. She was not the same kind of

woman as his wife—her habits of mind were different. The variety, the fluctuating charm, the constant movement and change that were in Mrs. Beresford did not exist in this other. She would sit and work by the lamplight, looking up sweetly to answer, but happy to be silent if her companion liked it. She made herself always the second and not the first, responding, not leading; her gift was to divine what was in others, to follow where they went. It was this that made her so popular with all her friends. When they came to her for advice she would give it without that doubt and fear of responsibility which restrains so many people. For why? she had a rule which was infallible, and which made her safe from responsibility, although she was not herself aware how closely she acted upon it. Her infallible guide was a faculty of seeing what people themselves wished, how their own judgments were tending, and what individually they wanted to do. This she followed sometimes consciously, but often quite unconsciously, as habit led her, and she never was afraid of saying do this, or do that. It was one of her great attractions. She might be wise or she might be less than wise, in her decisions, her friends said, but she never shilly-shallied, never was afraid of saying to you with sweet frankness and boldness what she thought it would be good to do.

The consequence of this simple rule was that good advice from Mrs. Meredith's lips was ever so much more popular than good advice had ever been known to be before. It is not a commodity which is generally admired, however admirable it may be; but those whom she advised were not only edified but flattered and brightened. It made themselves feel more wise. It was sweet at once to the giver and to the receiver, and kindled an increased warmth of sympathy between them. Now and then, to be sure, the course of action she recommended might not be a successful one, but is not that the case with all human counsel? This, which was the secret of her power with all her other friends, subjugated James Beresford too. As there is nothing so dear to a man as his own way, so there is no individual so dear as that friend who will recommend and glorify his own way to him, and help him to enjoyment of it. This she did with a gentle patience and constancy which was wonderful. It was natural to her, like all great gifts, and the great charm of it all was that few people suspected the reflection from their own feelings and sentiments which

colored Mrs. Meredith's mind, nor was she at all invariably aware of it herself. Sometimes she believed implicitly in her own advice as the natural growth of her own thoughts and experiences, and believed herself to have an independent judgment. And it is to be supposed that she had opinions and ideas—certainly she had ways of her own, the brightest, and kindest, and most caressing that could be conceived.

This was the secret of those absences which had left Cara so lonely. They had become now the confirmed and constant habit of her father's life. And it would be vain to say that this had been done without remark. While he was at home for a week or two only in a year no one said anything about his frequent visits to the kind neighbor who was not even a widow; but lately he had stayed longer when he came back to the square, sometimes remaining a month instead of a week, and now it was understood that he had returned "for good." Both Mrs. Meredith and Mr. Beresford had, it may be supposed, friends who took the responsibility of their conduct, and thought it necessary to supervise them in their innocent but unusual intimacy, and these excellent persons were in the attitude of suspended judgment waiting to see what difference Cara's presence would make, and that of Oswald, in the one house and the other. But it had not as yet made any very apparent difference. At nine o'clock, or thereabouts, the door would shut in the one house, and cook and John would exchange glances; while in the other the bell would tinkle, and the two maids, who divided John's duties between them, would say, "There is Mr. Beresford, as usual!" and shrug their shoulders. He came in, and they did not take the trouble now even to announce the habitual visitor, who had his special chair and his special corner, as if he belonged to the house. Sometimes the two friends would talk long and much, sometimes they scarcely talked at all. They knew each other like brother and sister, and yet there was between them a delicate separation such as does not exist between relations. In the warm room, softly lighted and friendly, the man who had been wounded found a refuge which was more like the old blessedness of home than anything else could be, and yet was not that blessedness. It did not occur to him that because his daughter had come back to him he was to be banished from this other shelter. Cara's coming, indeed, had scarcely been her father's doing. Many discussions on

the point had taken place among all his friends, and Mrs. Meredith had been spurred up by everybody to represent his duty to him. She had done it with a faint sense in her mind that it would affect herself in some undesirable way, and with a certainty that she was departing altogether from her usual rule of argument with the personal wishes of her clients. Mr. Beresford had no personal wish on the subject. He preferred rather that Cara should stay where she was happy. "If she comes here what can I do for her?" he said. "My society is not what a girl will like. I cannot take her to the dances and gaieties which will please her."

"Why not?" Mrs. Meredith had said.

"Why not!" He was petrified by her want of perception. "What could I do in such places? And she is happy where she is. She has women about her who know how to manage her. Her coming would derange my life altogether. You, who feel everybody's difficulties, you must feel this. What am I to do with a girl of seventeen? It would be wretched for her, and it could not be any addition to my happiness."

"Don't you think too much of that," said Mrs. Meredith, faltering; for indeed this was not at all her way. And it was hard for her to go against those feelings on the part of her companion which, on ordinary occasions, she followed implicitly. Even for herself Cara's presence would complicate the relations generally; but when she saw her duty, she did it, though with faltering. Everybody else had spurred and goaded her up to this duty, and she would not shrink. "If you are going to settle you ought to have your child with you."

"That you should dwell like this upon abstract oughts!" said Mr. Beresford; "you, who are so full of understanding of personal difficulties. It is not like you. If I feel that Cara is better where she is — happier, more suitably cared for —"

"Still, you know when the father is settled at home, his only child should be with him," Mrs. Meredith reiterated. She was faithful to her *consigne*. If she did not see it, other people did, for whom she was the mouthpiece. But it will be perceived that those persons were right who said she was not clever. When she was not following her favorite and congenial pursuit of divining others and reflecting them in her own person, she was reduced to this helpless play of reiteration, and stuck to her one point till everybody was tired of it. Beresford was so impatient that he

got up from his chair and began to pace up and down the room.

"There is reason in all things," he said. "My house now is emphatically a bachelor house, my servants suit me, my life is arranged as I like it, or at least as I can support it best. Cara would make a revolution in everything. What should I do with her? How should I amuse her? for, of course, she would want amusement. And she is happy, quite happy, where she is; nowhere could she be so well as she is now. My aunt and my sister are wrapt up in her. Yes, yes, of course I am fond of my poor little girl; but what could I do with her? You are always so reasonable — but not here."

"She should be with her father," said Mrs. Meredith, sticking to her *consigne*; and of course he thought it was perversity and opposition, and never divined what it cost her to maintain, against all her habits of mind, the opposite side. When, however, it appeared by the Sunninghill letters that the ladies there took the same view, Mr. Beresford had no more to say. He yielded, but not with a good grace. "You shall have your will," he said; "but Cara will not be happy." He did not take Oswald Meredith into consideration, or any such strange influence; and as for changing his own habits, how was that to be thought of? Life was hard enough anyhow, with all the alleviations which fate permitted. Did any one suppose that a girl of seventeen, whom he scarcely knew, could be made into a companion for him by the mere fact that she was his daughter? No: his mornings, which were occupied with what he called hard work; his afternoons, which he spent among his serious friends in his clubs and learned societies; and that evening hour, most refreshing to his soul of any, in which the truest sympathy, the tenderest kindness proved a cordial which kept him alive — which of these, was it to be supposed, he would give up for the society of little Cara? He was very glad to give her all that was wanted for her comfort — a good, careful attendant, plenty of dresses and pocket-money, and so forth; but he could not devote himself, surely, (who could expect it?) to the society of a child. That any one should expect this gave him even a little repulsion from, a half prejudice against her. When she appeared, with that serious, half-disapproving look of hers, and when he realized her, seated up-stairs in that drawing-room which he had never entered since her mother's death, among all her mother's relics, recalling to him at

once a poignant sense of his loss and a sharp thrill of conscious pain, in having so far surmounted that loss and put it behind him, the impulse of separation came still more strongly upon him. He shut himself up in his study more determinedly in the morning, and in the evening had more need than ever of the consoling visits which wound him up and kept his moral being in harmony. He had to ask Mrs. Meredith her advice and her opinion, and to ask even her guidance in respect to Cara. Who could tell him so well what to do with a girl as the kindest and best of women? Oswald, who had been at home for some time, did not like these visits so well as his mother did. No one ever suggested to the young man that he was *de trop*; but to be sure there were pauses in their conversation when this third person was present, and allusions would be made which he did not understand. So that latterly he had been out or in the library down-stairs when Mr. Beresford came; very often out, which Mrs. Meredith did not like, but did not know how to prevent, for to be sure she felt the embarrassment also of her son's slight disapproval, and of the restraint his presence produced. Why should he cause a restraint? her boy! but she felt that he did so, and it made her unhappy. It was pleasanter in the former evenings, when Mr. Beresford came home only now and then, and there was neither a Cara nor an Oswald to perplex the simple state of affairs.

"How is she to amuse herself?" Mr. Beresford said to her. "Yes, yes, I know you will do what you can—when was there ever a time when you did not do what you could and more?—but I cannot take her about, I cannot have any one in the house to keep her company, and how is she to live there, a young girl, alone?"

"I think Cara will do very well," said Mrs. Meredith. "She can always come to me. I have told her so; and the people we know are all beginning to call. She will soon have plenty of friends. People will invite her, and you must go with her here and there."

"I go with her? You know how I hate going out!"

"Once at least—say only once. You must do that, and then you will find Cara will have her own friends; she will not be a difficulty any longer. I am glad you trust in me to do what I can for her—and Oswald."

"Of course I trust in you," he said; "but it will break up everything. I know it will—after coming to a kind of calm,

after feeling that I can settle down again, and that life is not utterly distasteful to me—you will not wonder that I should be frightened for everything. And you, who have done so much for me."

"I have not done anything," said Mrs. Meredith, looking up smiling from her book.

"You say so, but it is you who have done everything; and if I am to be plucked from my refuge now, and pitched forth upon the world—I believe I am a coward. I shrink from mere outside intercourse, from being knocked up against one and another, and shut out from what I prize most."

"How can that be?" she said; "you get fretful, you men, when everything does not go as you wish. Have a little patience. When Oswald came home, it seemed at first as if he, dear boy, was going to upset all my habits; but it was a vain fear. The first little strangeness is over, and he has settled down; and we are happy—happier than ever. It will be the same with Cara and you."

Beresford gave a half-groan of dissent. I fear Mrs. Meredith saw that it had a double meaning, and that it expressed a certain impatience of her son as well as of his daughter; but this was one of the things which she would not see.

"Yes," she said, with a little nod of her head, "I will answer for it, it will be just the same with Cara and you."

Mr. Beresford gave a little snort at this of absolute dissatisfaction. "I don't like changes of any kind," he said; "when we have got to be tolerably well in this dismal world, why not be content with it, and stop there? '*Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien.*' How true that is! and yet what can be better than well? I dislike changes, and this almost more than any other. I foresee it will bring me a thousand troubles—not to you, I hope," he said, his voice slightly faltering; "it would be unbearable indeed if it brought any trouble to you."

"Cara cannot bring any trouble to me," she said brightly; "of that I am sure enough: you are making a ghost of the dearest child. By-and-by you will see how sweet she is and how good."

"All girls have a way of being sweet and good," he said cynically, which was a mood quite uncongenial to him and out of his way.

"That is not like you," said Mrs. Meredith.

He knew it was not. The thought had passed through his own mind that the saying was ungenerous and unworthy of

him, and unworthy of utterance in her presence. What could any man be worth who could utter one of those foolish stock taunts against women in any stage of life, before a woman who was to him the queen of friends, the essence of everything consolatory and sweet. "You are always right," he replied hastily, "and I am wrong, as a matter of course. I am out of sorts. I had but just caught hold of life again and found it practicable, and here seems something that may unsettle all; but I am wrong, it is almost certain, and you must be right."

"That is a delightful sentiment—for me; but I am sure of my ground about Cara. Oh, quite sure!" she said, "as sure—as I am of my own boys."

Beresford did not say anything, but he breathed a short impatient sigh. Her boys were all very well at a distance. When they had been absent he had been fond of them, and had shared in the sentiment expressed by all Mrs. Meredith's friends, of regret for their absence; but when a small share even of a woman's company has become one of your daily comforts it is difficult not to find her grown-up son in your way. He reflected upon this as he shook hands with her, and went back to his dwelling-place next door with a consciousness of impatience which was quite unjustifiable. To be sure her grown-up son had a right to her which nothing could gainsay, and was, in a sort of a way, master of the house under her, and might even have a kind of right to show certain mild objections and dislikes to special visitors. Mr. Beresford could not deny these privileges of a son; but they galled him, and there was in his mind an unexpressed irritation against those troublesome members of the new generation who would thrust themselves in the way of their elders, and tread upon their heels perpetually. Children were much pleasanter than these grown-up young people. He did not see the use of them. Cara, for instance, though it was supposed she was to keep house for her father, of what use was she in the house? Cook (naturally) knew a hundred times more than she did, and kept everything going as on wheels. As for Oswald Meredith, who had been a sprightly and delightful boy, what was he now?—an idle young man about town, quite beyond his mother's management; doing nothing, probably good for nothing, idling away the best years of his life. Why did not she send him to India, as he was doing so little here? What an ease to everybody con-

cerned that would be! He thought of it in the most philosophical way, as good for everybody, best for the young man—a relief to his mother's anxieties, a thing which his best friends must desire. What a pity that it could not be done at once! But it would scarcely be good policy on his part to suggest it to Oswald's mother. She might think he had other motives; and what motive could he have except to promote the welfare of the son of such a kind friend?

CHAPTER XV.

ROGER.

ROGER BURCHELL had set his mind steadily, from the moment of Cara's translation to her father's house, upon spending those Sundays, which he had hitherto passed at home, with his aunt at Notting Hill. But the rest of the world has a way of throwing obstacles in the path of heroes of twenty in a quite incredible and heartless manner. It was not that the authorities at the rectory made any serious objections. There was so many of them that one was not missed—and Roger was not one of the more useful members of the family. He had no voice, for one thing, and therefore was useless in church; and he declined Sunday-school work, and was disposed to be noisy, and disturbed the attention of the little ones; therefore he could be dispensed with at home, and nobody cared to interfere with his inclinations. Neither had the aunt at Notting Hill any objection to Roger—he was a friendly boy, willing to take a quiet walk, ready to be kind to those who were kind to him—and to have somebody to share her solitary Sunday's dinner, and make her feel like other people when she went to church, was pleasant to her. He was a boy who never would want to shirk morning church, or keep the servants from it, to get him a late breakfast, like so many young men. But accident, not evil intention, came in Roger's way. His aunt fell ill, and then something went wrong at the engineering college, and leave was withheld—entirely by caprice or mistake, for Roger, of course, was sure of being entirely innocent, as such youthful sufferers generally are. The upshot was, that his first Sunday in London did not really occur until Cara had been a whole month in her new home. How he chafed and fretted under this delay it is unnecessary to tell. It seemed to him an age since that October afternoon when the sun was so warm on the Hill, and Cara stood by his side

looking over the country in its autumn tints, and watching the shadows fly and the lights gleam over St. George's. What a long time it was! The mellow autumn had stolen away into the fogs of winter; November is but the next month, yet what a difference there is between its clammy chills, and the thick air that stifles and chokes you, and that warmth and sunny glow with which red-breasted October sings the fall of the leaves and the gathering-in of the fruit! And in that time how much might have happened. Had it been dreary for her all by herself in London, separated from her friends? or had she found new people to keep her cheerful, and forgotten the friends of her youth? These were the questions the lad asked himself as he went up to town from Berkshire, on the evening of Saturday, the 25th of November. All that he had heard of since she left had been from a letter which Miss Cherry had read to his sister Agnes, and from which it appeared that Cara felt London lonely and regretted her friends in the country. "How I wish I could have a peep at all of you or any of you!" she had said. Agnes had been pleased with the expression, and so was he. "All of us or any of us," he said to himself for the hundredth time as the train flew over the rain-sodden country. He thought, with a thrill at his heart, that her face would light up, as he had seen it do, and she would be glad to see him. She would put into his that small hand, that seemed to melt in his grasp like a flake of snow; and perhaps there would come upon her cheek that faint crimson, which only things very pleasant brought there—the reflection of a sweet excitement. What an era that would be for Roger! he dreamt it out moment by moment, till he almost felt that it had occurred. Sometimes a dream of the other kind would start across him—a horrible fancy that he would find her happy among others, making new friends, forgetting the old; but this was too painful to be encouraged. He thought the train as slow as an old hackney coach, when at last, after all these delays, he got away and found himself actually on the road to London and to her, and thought of a story he had heard of some one in hot haste, as he was, who had jumped out of his carriage and pushed it on behind to arrive the sooner. Roger felt disposed to do so, though his train was an express, and though he knew he could not go to the square that evening to see her. But he was so much nearer her when he got to Notting Hill. She was on one side of the

Park and he on the other. Next day he would walk across, through all the Sunday people, through the yellow fog, under the bare-branched trees, and knock at her door. There was still a moment of suspense, still a long wintry night—and then!

His aunt thought very well of the young man when he got to Notting Hill. She was his mother's sister, a widow and without children, and Roger had been named after her husband, the late Captain Brandon, whose portrait hung over her mantelpiece, and whose memory was her pride. She thought her nephew was like her side of the house, not "those Burchells," and felt a thrill of pride as he came in, tall and strong, in his red-brown hair and budding moustache, with a touch of autumn color about him in the heavy despondency of the November day.

"What weather!" she said, "what weather, Roger! I daresay it is a little better in the country; but we have nothing else to expect in November, when the wind blows up the smoke out of the city."

Roger hastened to assure her that the country was a great deal worse, that the river was like a big, dismal ditch, full of mists and rains, and that town, with its cheerful lights and cheerful company, was the only place. Aunt Mary let herself be persuaded. She gave him a nice little dish of cutlets with his tea. She asked him questions about his mother and sister, and whether his papa's opinions were not getting modified by experience and by the course of events.

"Hasn't he learned to take warning by all this Romanizing?" she asked, and shook her head at Roger's doubtful reply. She differed so much in ecclesiastical opinion from her brother-in-law, that she very seldom went to the rectory. But she was glad to hear all about her godchild, little Mary, and how Philip was getting on at Cambridge. And how pleasant it was to have some one to talk to, instead of sitting all alone and melancholy, thinking, or reading the newspaper. She made much of Roger, and told him he would always be welcome; he was to come as often as he pleased.

"I shall see her to-morrow," Roger said to himself, as he laid his head upon his pillow. The thought did not stop him from sleeping; why should it? but it suggested a string of dreams, some of which were terribly tantalizing. He was just putting out his hand to take hers, just about to hear the answer to some momentous question, when he would wake sud-

denly and lose it all; but still even the disappointment only awakened him to the fact that he was to see her to-morrow; he was to see her to-morrow! nay, to-day, though this yellow glimmer did not look much like daylight. He got up the moment he was called, and dressed with much pains and care—too much care. When his toilette was careless Roger looked, as he was, a gentleman; but when he took extra pains, a Sunday look crept about him, a certain stiffness, as of a man occupying clothes to which he was unaccustomed. His frock-coat—it was his first—was uglier and squarer than even frock-coats generally are, his hat looked higher, his gloves a terrible bondage. Poor boy! but for Cara he never would have had that frock-coat; thus to look our best we look our worst, and evil becomes our good. But his aunt was much pleased with his appearance when he went to church with her, and thought his dress just what every gentleman ought to wear on Sunday.

"But your gloves are too tight, my dear," she said.

Roger thought everything was tight, and was in twenty minds to abandon his fine clothes and put on the rough morning-suit he had come in; but the frock-coat carried the day. He could not eat at Mrs. Brandon's early dinner. She was quite unhappy about him, and begged him not to stand on ceremony, but to tell her frankly if it was not to his mind. "For if you are going to spend your Sundays with me it is just as easy to buy one thing as another," Aunt Mary said, good, kind, deceived woman. She was very glad he should take a walk afterwards, hoping it would do him good.

"And I think perhaps I had better call at the square and see Miss Beresford. Her aunt is sure to ask me when I see her," he said.

"Do, my dear," said the unsuspecting woman. And he set off across the park. It was damp enough and foggy enough to quench any man's courage. The Sunday people, who were out in spite of all disadvantages, were blue, half with the cold and half with the color of the pitiless day. A few old ladies in close broughams took their constitutional drive slowly round and round. What pleasure could they find in it? still, as it is the ordinance of heaven that there should be old ladies as well as young men of twenty, it was a good thing they had comfortable broughams to drive about in; and they had been young in their time, Roger supposed, feeling it hard

upon everybody not to have the expectations, the hopes, that made his own heart beat. How it beat and thumped against his breast! He was almost sorry, though he was glad, when the walk was over and the tall roofs of the houses in the square overshadowed him. His heart jumped higher still, though he thought it had been incapable of more when he got to the house. "Doors where my heart was used to beat." He did not know any poetry to speak of, and these words did not come to him. He felt that she must be glad to see him, this dull damp Sunday afternoon, the very time when heaven and earth stood still, when there was nothing to amuse or occupy the languid mind. No doubt she and her father would be sitting together suppressing two mutual yawns, reading two dull books; or, oh, blessed chance! perhaps her father would have retired to his library, and Cara would be alone. He pictured this to himself—a silent room, a Sunday solitude, a little drooping figure by the chimney-corner, brightening up at sight of a well-known face—when the drawing-room door opened before him, and his dream exploded like a bubble, and with a shock of self-derision and disappointment more bitter than honest Roger had ever felt in all his simple life before. There were several people in the room, but naturally Roger's glance sought out the only one he was interested in, the only one he knew in the little company. She was standing in front of one of the windows, the pale wintry light behind making a silhouette of her pretty figure, and the fine lines of her profile; but curiously enough, it was not she, after the first glance, who attracted Roger's gaze, but the other figure which stood beside her, close to her, young, and friendly, in all the confidence of intimacy. It was Oswald Meredith who was holding a book in which he was showing Cara something—she, holding the corner of it with one hand, drew it down to her level, and with a raised finger of the other seemed to check what he was saying. They made the prettiest group; another young man, sitting at the table, gazing at the pair, thought so too, with an envious sentiment not so strong or so bitter as Roger's, but enough to swear by. Oswald had all the luck, this young fellow was saying to himself: little Cara, too! Behind was Mrs. Meredith, sitting by the fire, and Mr. Beresford, gloomy and sombre, standing by her. It was the first time he had been in this room, and the visit had been made expressly for the purpose of dragging him into it.

He stood near his friend, looking down, sometimes looking at her, but otherwise never raising his eyes. This, however, was a side scene altogether uninteresting to Roger. What was it to him what these two elder people might be feeling or thinking? All that he could see was Cara and "that fellow," who presumed to be there, standing by her side, occupying her attention. And how interested she looked! more than in all the years they had known each other she had ever looked for him.

Cara started at the sound of his name. "Mr. Burchell? oh, something must be wrong at home!" she cried; then, turning round suddenly, stopped with a nervous laugh of relief. "Oh, it is only Roger! what a fright you gave me! I thought it must be your father, and that Aunt Charity was ill. Papa, this is Roger Burchell, from the rectory. You remember, he said he would come and see me. But, Roger, I thought you were coming directly, and it is quite a long time now since I left home."

"I could not come sooner," he said, comforted by this. "I came as soon as ever I could. My aunt was ill and could not have me; and then there was some trouble at the college," he added hurriedly, feeling himself to be getting too explanatory. Cara had given him her hand; she had pointed to a chair near where she was standing; she had given up the book which Oswald now held, and over which he was looking, half-amused, at the newcomer. Roger was as much occupied by him, with hot instinct of rivalry, as he was with Cara herself, who was the goddess of his thoughts; and how the plain young engineer, in his stiff frock-coat, despised the handsome young man about town, so easy and so much at home! with a virulence of contempt which no one could have thought to be in Roger. "Do you bite your thumb at me, sir?" he was tempted to say, making up to him straight before the other had time to open his lips. But of course, being in civilized society, Roger did not dare to obey his impulse, though it stirred him to the heart.

"You don't introduce us to your friend, Cara," said Oswald, smiling, in an undertone.

The fellow called her Cara! Was it all settled, then, and beyond hope, in four short weeks? Oh, what a fool Roger had been to allow himself to be kept away!

"Mr. Roger Burchell—Mr. Meredith—Mr. Edward Meredith," said Cara, with a slight evanescent blush. "Roger is almost as old a friend at the Hill as you

are at the square. We have all been children together;" and then there was a pause which poor little Cara, not used to keeping such hostile elements in harmony, did not know how to manage. She asked timidly if he had been at the Hill—if he had seen —

"I came direct from the college last night," he said; and poor Roger could not keep a little flavor of bitterness out of his tone, as who should say, "A pretty fool I was to come at all!"

"The—college?" said Oswald, in his half-laughing tone.

"I mean only the scientific college, not anything to do with a university," said Roger, defiant in spite of himself. "I am an engineer—a working-man"—and though he said this as a piece of bravado, poor fellow! it is inconceivable how Sundayish, how *endimanche*, how much like a real working-man in unused best raiment, he felt in his frock-coat.

"Oh, tell me about that!" said Mrs. Meredith, coming forward; "it is just what I want to know. Mr. Roger Burchell, did you say, Cara? I think I used to know your mother. I have seen her with Miss Cherry Beresford? Yes; I thought it must be the same. Do you know I have a particular reason for wishing to hear about your college? One of my friends wants to send his son there if he can get in. Will you tell me about it? I know you want to talk to Cara——"

"Oh, no; not if she is engaged," said Roger, and blushed hot with excessive youthful shame when he had made this foolish speech.

"She will not be engaged long, for we are going presently," said the smiling, gracious woman, who began to exercise her usual charm upon the angry lad in spite of himself. She drew a chair near to the spot where he still stood defiant. "I shall not keep you long," she said; and what could Roger do but sit down, though so much against his will, and allow himself to be questioned?

"Your friend from the country is impatient of your other friends," said Oswald, closing the book which he held out to Cara, and marking the place as he gave it to her. "Do you want to get rid of us as much as he does?"

"He does not want to get rid of any one, but he does not understand—society," said Cara, in the same undertone. Roger could not hear what it was, but he felt sure they were talking of him, though he did his best to listen to Mrs. Meredith's questions. Then the other one rose, who

was not so handsome as Oswald, and went to her other side, completely shutting her out from the eyes of the poor fellow who had come so far, and taken so much trouble to see her. The college — what did he care for the college ! about which the soft-voiced stranger was questioning him. He made her vague, broken answers, and turned round undisguisedly, poor fellow ! to where Cara stood ; yet all he could see of her was the skirt of her blue dress from the other side of Edward Meredith, whose head, leaning forward, came between Roger and the girl on whom his heart was set.

" Mr. Burchell, Cara and her father are dining with my boys and me. Edward is only with me for a few hours ; he is going away by the last train. Will not you come, too, and join us ? Then Cara can see a little more of you. Do you stay in town to-night ? "

Two impulses struggled in Roger's mind — to refuse disdainfully, or to accept gratefully. In the first case he would have said he had dined already, making a little brag of his aunt's early hours, in the second — a calculation passed very quickly through his mind, so quick that it was concluded almost before Mrs. Meredith's invitation.

" I could," he said, faltering ; " or, perhaps, if your son is going I might go, too, which would be best — "

" Very well, then, it is a bargain," she said, putting out her hand with a delightful smile. He felt how warm and sweet it was, even though he was trying at the moment to see Cara. This was the kind of mother these fellows had, and Cara living next door ! Surely all the luck seems to be centred on some people ; others have no chance against them. He stood by while Mrs. Meredith got up, drawing her sons with her. " Come, boys, you can carry on your talk later," she said. " Good-bye for the moment, *Cara mia*." Then she turned to Mr. Beresford who stood gloomily, with his eyes bent on the fire. " You are not sorry you have broken the spell ? " she said, with a voice which she kept for him alone, or so at least he thought.

He gave his shoulders a hasty shrug. " We can talk of that later. I am going to see you to the door," he said, giving her his arm. The boys lingered. Oswald was patting his book affectionately with one hand. It was Edward who was " making the running " now.

" You are still coming to dine, Cara ? " he said. " Don't turn me off for this

friend. He cannot be such an old friend as I am ; and I have only a few hours — "

" So has he," said Cara ; " and he told me he was coping. What am I to do ? "

" There are three courses that you can pursue," said Oswald. " Leave him, as Ned recommends ; stay with him, as I certainly don't recommend ; or bring him with you. And which of these, Cara, you may choose will be a lesson as to your opinion of us. But you can't stay with him ; that would be a slight to my mother, and your father would not allow it. The compromise would be to bring him."

" Oh, how can I do that, unless Mrs. Meredith told me to do it ? No ; perhaps he will go away of himself — perhaps — "

" Poor wretch ! he looks unhappy enough," said Edward, with the sympathy of fellow-feeling. Oswald laughed. The misery and offence in the new-comer's face was only amusing to him.

" Cara," he said, " if you are going to begin offensive warfare, and to flaunt young men from the country in our faces, I for one will rebel. It is not fair to us ; we were not prepared for anything of the sort."

" My mother is calling us," said Edward, impatiently. Two or three times before his brother had irritated him to-day. Either he was in a very irritable mood, or Oswald was more provoking than usual. " I have only a few hours," he continued, aggrieved, in a low tone, " and I have scarcely spoken to you, Cara ; and it was you and I who used to be the closest friends. Don't you remember ? Oswald can see you when he pleases ; I have only one day. You won't disappoint us, will you ? I wish you'd go — this was to his brother — " I'll follow. There are some things I want to speak to Cara about, and you have taken her up all the afternoon with your poetry. Yes, yes ; I see, there is *him* behind ; but, Cara, look here, you won't be persuaded to stay away to-night ? "

" Not if I can help it," said the girl, who was too much embarrassed by this first social difficulty to feel the flattery involved. She turned to Roger, when the others went down-stairs, with a somewhat disturbed and tremulous smile.

" They are our next-door neighbors, and they are very kind," she said. " Mrs. Meredith is so good to me ; as kind as if she were a relation " (this was all Cara knew of relationships). " I don't know what I should do without her ; and I have

known the boys all my life. Roger, won't you sit down? I am so sorry to have been taken up like this the very moment you came."

"But if they live next door, and you know them so well, I daresay you are very often taken up like this," said Roger, "and that will be hard upon your country friends. And I think," he added, taking courage as he found that the door remained closed, and that not even her father (estimable man!) came back, "that we have a better claim than they have; for you were only a child when you came to the Hill, and you have grown up there."

"I like all my old friends," said Cara, evasively. "Some are — I mean they differ — one likes them for different things."

The poor boy leaped to the worse interpretation of this, which, indeed, was not very far from the true one. "Some are poorer and not so fine as others," he said; "but perhaps, Cara, the rough ones, the homely ones, those you despise, are the most true."

"I don't despise any one," she said, turning away, and taking up Oswald Meredith's book.

By Jove! even when he was gone was "that fellow" to have the best of it with his confounded book? Roger's heart swelled; and then he felt that expediency was very much to be thought of, and that when a man could not have all he wanted it was wise to put up with what he could get.

"Cara, don't be angry with me," he said. "I shall like your friends, too, if — if you wish me. The lady is very nice and kind, as you say. She has asked me to go there to dinner, too."

"You!" Cara said, with (he thought) a gleam of annoyance. Roger jumped up, wild with rage and jealousy, but then he sat down again, which was certainly the best thing for him to do.

From Macmillan's Magazine.
CHARLOTTE BRONTE. A MONOGRAPH.

VI.

THE "storm and stress" period of Charlotte Brontë's life was not what the world believes it to have been. Like the rest of our race, she had to fight her own battle in the wilderness, not with one devil, but with many; and it was this sharp contest with the temptations which crowd the threshold of an opening life which made her what she was. The world be-

lieves that it was under the parsonage roof that the author of "*Jane Eyre*" gathered up the precious experiences which were afterwards turned to such good account. Mrs. Gaskell, who was carried away by her honest, womanly horror of hardened vice, gives us to understand that the tragic turning-point in the history of the sisters was connected with the disgrace and ruin of their brother. We are even asked to believe that but for the folly of a single woman, whom it is probable that Charlotte never saw, "*Currer Bell*" would never have taken up her pen, and no halo of glory would have settled on the scarred and rugged brows of prosaic Haworth.

It is not so. There may be disappointment among those who have been nurtured on the traditions of the Brontë romance, when they find that the reality is different from what they supposed it to be; some shallow judges may even assume that Charlotte herself loses in moral stature when it is shown that it was not her horror at her brother's fall which drove her to find relief in literary speech. But the truth must be told; and for my part I see nothing in that truth which affects, even in an infinitesimal degree, the fame and the honor of the woman of whom I write.

It was Charlotte's visit to Brussels then, first as pupil and afterwards as teacher in the school of Madame Héger, which was the turning-point in her life, which changed its currents, and gave to it a new purpose and a new meaning. Up to the moment of that visit she had been the simple, kindly, truthful Yorkshire girl, endowed with strange faculties, carried away at times by burning impulses, moved often by emotions the nature of which she could not fathom, but always hemmed in by her narrow experiences, her limited knowledge of life and the world. Until she went to Belgium her sorest troubles had been associated with her dislike to the society of strangers, her heaviest burden had been the necessity under which she lay of tasting that "cup of life as it is mixed for governesses" which she detested so heartily. Under the belief that they could qualify themselves to keep a school of their own if they had once mastered the delicacies of the French and German languages, she and Emily set off for this sojourn in Brussels.

One may be forgiven for speculating as to her future lot had she accepted the offer of marriage she received in her early governess-days, and settled down as the

faithful wife of a sober English gentleman. In that case "Shirley" perhaps might have been written, but "Jane Eyre" and "Villette" never. She learnt much during her two years' sojourn in the Belgian capital; but the greatest of all the lessons she mastered whilst there was that self-knowledge the taste of which is so bitter to the mouth, though so wholesome to the life. Mrs. Gaskell has made such ample use of the letters she penned during the long months which she spent as an exile from England, that there is comparatively little left to cull from them. Everybody knows the outward circumstances of her story at this time. For a brief period she had the company of Emily; and the two sisters, working together with the unremitting zeal of those who have learned that time is money, were happy and hopeful, enjoying the novel sights of the gay foreign capital, gathering fresh experiences every day, and looking forward to the moment when they would return to familiar Haworth, and realize the dream of their lives by opening a school of their own within the walls of the parsonage. But then Emily left, and Charlotte, after a brief holiday at home, returned alone. Years after, writing to her friend, she speaks of her return in these words: "I returned to Brussels after aunt's death against my conscience, prompted by what then seemed an irresistible impulse. I was punished for my selfish folly by a total withdrawal for more than two years of happiness and peace of mind." Why did she thus go back "against her conscience"? Her friends declared that her future husband dwelt somewhere within sound of the chimes of St. Gudule, and that she insisted upon returning to Brussels because she was about to be married there. We know now how different was the reality. The husband who awaited her was even then about to begin his long apprenticeship of love at Haworth. Yet none the less had her spirit, if not her heart, been captured and held captive in the Belgian city. It is not in her letters that we find the truth regarding her life at this time. The truth indeed is there, but not all the truth. "In catalepsy and dread trance," says Lucy Snowe, "I studiously held the quick of my nature. . . . It is on the surface only the common gaze will fall." The secrets of her inner life could not be trusted to paper, even though the lines were intended for no eyes but those of her friend and confidante. There are some things, as we know well, the heart hides as by instinct, and which even frank

and open natures only reveal under compulsion. One of the hardest features of the last year she spent at Brussels was the necessity that she was under of locking all the deepest emotions of her life within her own breast, of preserving the calm and even cold exterior, which should tell nothing to the common gaze, above the troubled, fevered heart that beat within.

When do you think I shall see you? [she cries to her friend within a few days of her final return to Haworth:] I have of course much to tell you, and I dare say you have much also to tell me—things which we should neither of us wish to commit to paper. . . . I do not know whether you feel as I do, but there are times now when it appears to me as if all my ideas and feelings, except a few friendships and affections, are changed from what they used to be. Something in me which used to be enthusiasm is tamed down and broken. I have fewer illusions. What I wish for now is active exertion—a stake in life. Haworth seems such a lonely, quiet spot, buried away from the world. I no longer regard myself as young; indeed I shall soon be twenty-eight, and it seems as if I ought to be working and braving the rough realities of the world as other people do. It is, however, my duty to restrain this feeling at present, and I will endeavor to do so.

Yes; she was "disillusioned" now, and she had brought back from Brussels a heart which could never be quite so light, a spirit which could never again soar so buoyantly, as in those earlier years when the tree of knowledge was still untasted, and the mystery of life still unrevealed. This stay in Belgium was, as I have said, the turning-point in Charlotte Brontë's career, and its true history and meaning is to be found, not in her "Life" and letters, but in "Villette," the master-work of her mind, and the revelation of the most vivid passages in her own heart's history. "I said I disliked Lucy Snowe," is a remark which Mrs. Gaskell innocently repeats in her memoir of Charlotte Brontë. One need not be surprised at it. Lucy Snowe was never meant to be liked—by everybody; but none the less is Lucy Snowe the truest picture we possess of the real Charlotte Brontë; whilst not a few of the fortunes which befell this strange heroine are literal transcripts from the life of her creator. One little incident in "Villette"—Lucy's impulsive visit to a Roman Catholic confessor—is taken direct from Charlotte's own experience. During one of the long, lonely holidays in the foreign school, when her mind was restless and disturbed, her heart heavy, her nerves jarred and jangled, she fled from the great

empty schoolrooms to seek peace in the streets ; and she found, not peace perhaps, but sympathy at least, in the counsels of a priest, seated at the confessional in a church into which she wandered, who took pity on the little heretic, and soothed her troubled spirit without attempting to enmesh it in the folds of Romanism. It was from experiences such as these, with a chastened heart and a nature tamed down, though by no means broken, that she returned to familiar Haworth, to face "the rough realities of the world."

Rough, indeed, those realities were in her case. Her brother, once the hope of the family, had now become its burden and its curse ; and from that moment he was to be the prodigal for whom no fatted calf would ever be killed. Her father was fast losing his eyesight ; she and her sisters were getting on in life, and "something must be done." Charlotte had returned home, but her heart was still in Brussels, and the wings of her spirit began to beat impatiently against the cage in which she found herself imprisoned. It was only the old story. She had gone out into the world, had tasted strange joys, and drunk deep of waters the very bitterness of which seemed to endear them to her. Returning to Haworth she went back a new woman, with tastes and hopes which it was hard to reconcile with the monotony of life in the parsonage which had once satisfied her completely.

"If I could leave home I should not be at Haworth," she says soon after her return. "I know life is passing away, and I am doing nothing, earning nothing ; a very bitter knowledge it is at moments, but I see no way out of the mist." And then, almost for the first time in her life, something like a cry of despair goes up from her lips : "Probably when I am free to leave home I shall neither be able to find place nor employment. Perhaps, too, I shall be quite past the prime of life, my faculties will be wasted, and my few acquirements in a great measure forgotten. These ideas sting me keenly sometimes ; but whenever I consult my conscience it affirms that I am doing right in staying at home ; and bitter are its upbraiding when I yield to an eager desire for release."

But this outburst of personal feeling was exceptional, and was uttered in one ear only. Within the walls of her home Charlotte again became the house-mother, busying herself with homely cares, and ever watching for some opportunity of carrying her plan of school-keeping into execution. Nor did she allow either the

troubles at home or that weight at her own heart which she bore in secrecy to render her spirit morbid and melancholy. Not a few who have read Mrs. Gaskell's work labor under the belief that this was the effect which Charlotte Brontë's trials had upon her. As a matter of fact, however, she was far too strong, brave, cheerful — one had almost said manly — to give way to any such selfish repinings. She never was one of those sickly souls who go about "glooming over the woes of existence, and how unworthy God's universe is to have so distinguished a resident." Even when her own sorrows were deepest and her lot seemed hardest, she found a lively pleasure in discussing the characters and lots of others, and expended as much pains and time in analyzing the inner lives of her friends as our sham Byrons are wont to expend upon the study of their own feelings and emotions. Let the following letter, hitherto unpublished, written at the very time when the household clouds were blackest, speak for her freedom from morbid self-consciousness, as well as for her hearty interest in the well-being of those around her : —

You are a very good girl indeed to send me such a long and interesting letter. In all that account of the young lady and gentleman in the railway carriage I recognize your faculty for observation, which is a rarer gift than you imagine. You ought to be thankful for it. I never yet met with an individual devoid of observation whose conversation was interesting, nor with one possessed of that power in whose society I could not manage to pass a pleasant hour. I was amused with your allusions to individuals at —. I have little doubt of the truth of the report you mention about Mr. Z — paying assiduous attention to —. Whether it will ever come to a match is another thing. Money would decide that point, as it does most others of a similar nature. You are perfectly right in saying that Mr. Z — is more influenced by opinion than he himself suspects. I saw his lordship in a new light last time I was at —. Sometimes I could scarcely believe my eyes when I heard the stress he laid on wealth, appearance, family, and all those advantages which are the idols of the world. His conversation on marriage (and he talked much about it) differed in no degree from that of any hackneyed fortune-hunter, except that with his own peculiar and native audacity he avowed views and principles which more timid individuals conceal. Of course I raised no argument against anything he said. I listened and laughed inwardly to think how indignant I should have been eight years since if any one had accused Z — of being a worshipper of mammon and of interest. Indeed I still believe that the Z — of ten years ago is not the Z — of to-

day. The world with its hardness and selfishness has utterly changed him. He thinks himself grown wiser than the wisest. In a worldly sense he is wise. His feelings have gone through a process of petrifaction which will prevent them from ever warring against his interest; but Ichabod! all glory of principle and much elevation of character are gone. I learnt another thing. Fear the smooth side of Z—'s tongue more than the rough side. He has the art of paying peppery little compliments which he seems to bring out with a sort of difficulty, as if he were not used to that kind of thing, and did it rather against his will than otherwise. These compliments you feel disposed to value on account of their seeming rarity. Fudge! They are at any one's disposal, and are confessedly hollow blarney.

Still more significant, however, is the following letter, showing so kindly and careful an interest in the welfare of the friend to whom it is addressed, even whilst it bears the bitter tidings of a great household sorrow:—

July 31, 1845.

I was glad to get your little packet. It was quite a treasure of interest to me. I think the intelligence about G— is cheering. I have read the lines to Miss —. They are expressive of the affectionate feelings of his nature, and are poetical, insomuch as they are true. Faults in expression, rhythm, metre, were of course to be expected. All you say about Mr. — amused me much. Still I cannot put out of my mind one fear, viz., that you should think too much about him. Faulty as he is and as you know him to be, he has still certain qualities which might create an interest in your mind before you were aware. He has the art of impressing ladies by something involuntary in his look and manner; exciting in them the notion that he cares for them, while his words and actions are all careless, inattentive, and quite uncompromising for himself. It is only men who have seen much of life and of the world, and who are become in a measure indifferent to female attractions, that possess this art. So be on your guard. These are not pleasant or flattering words; but they are the words of one who has known you long enough to be indifferent about being temporarily disagreeable, provided she can be permanently useful.

I got home very well. There was a gentleman in the railroad carriage whom I recognized by his features immediately as a foreigner and a Frenchman. So sure was I of it that I ventured to say to him, "*Monsieur est françois, n'est-ce pas?*" He gave a start of surprise, and answered immediately in his own tongue. He appeared still more astonished and even puzzled when after a few minutes' further conversation I inquired if he had not passed the greater part of his life in Germany. He said the surmise was correct. I had

guessed it from his speaking French with the German accent.

It was ten o'clock at night when I got home. I found Branwell ill. He is so very often, owing to his own fault. I was not therefore shocked at first. But when Anne informed me of the immediate cause of his present illness I was very greatly shocked. He had last Thursday received a note from Mr. — sternly dismissing him. . . . We have had sad work with him since. He thought of nothing but stunning or drowning his distressed mind. No one in the house could have rest, and at last we have been obliged to send him from home for a week with some one to look after him. He has written to me this morning and expresses some sense of contrition for his frantic folly. He promises amendment on his return; but so long as he remains at home I scarce dare hope for peace in the house. We must all I fear prepare for a season of distress and disquietude. I cannot now ask Miss — or any one else.

The gloom in the household deepened; but Charlotte was still strong enough and brave enough to meet the world, to retain her accustomed interest in her friends, and to discuss as of yore the characters and lives of those around her. Curious are the glimpses one gets of her circle of acquaintances at this time. Little did many of those with whom she was brought in contact think of the keen eyes which were gazing out at them from under the prominent forehead of the parson's daughter. Yet not the least interesting feature of her correspondence is the evidence it affords that she was gradually gaining that knowledge of character which was afterwards to be lavished upon her books. A string of extracts from letters hitherto unpublished will suffice to show how the current of her life and thoughts ran in those days of domestic darkness, whilst the dawn of her fame was still hidden in the blackest hour of the night:—

I have just read M—'s letters. They are very interesting, and show the original and vigorous cast of her mind. There is but one thing I could wish otherwise in them, and that is a certain tendency to flightiness. It is not safe, it is not wise; and will often cause her to be misconstrued. Perhaps *flightiness* is not the right word; but it is a devil-may-care tone which I do not like when it proceeds from under a hat, and still less from under a bonnet.

I return you Miss —'s notes with thanks. I always like to read them. They appear to me so true an index of an amiable mind, and one not too conscious of its own worth. Beware of awakening in her this consciousness by undue praise. It is a privilege of simple-hearted, sensible, but not brilliant people that they can be and do good without comparing

their own thoughts and actions too closely with those of other people, and thence drawing strong food for self-appreciation. Talented people almost always know full well the excellence that is in them. . . . You ask me if we are more comfortable. I wish I could say anything favorable; but how can we be more comfortable so long as Branwell stays at home and degenerates instead of improving? It has been lately intimated to him that he would be received again on the same railroad where he was formerly stationed if he would behave more steadily, but he refuses to make an effort. He will not work, and at home he is a drain on every resource, an impediment to all happiness. But there's no use in complaining.

I thank you again for your last letter, which I found as full or fuller of interest than either of the preceding ones—it is just written as I wish you to write to me—not a detail too much. A correspondence of that sort is the next best thing to actual conversation, though it must be allowed that between the two there is a wide gulf still. I imagine your face, voice, presence very plainly when I read your letters. Still imagination is not reality, and when I return them to their envelope and put them by in my desk I feel the difference sensibly enough. My curiosity is a little piqued about that countess you mention. What is her name? you have not yet given it. I cannot decide from what you say whether she is really clever or only eccentric. The two sometimes go together, but are often seen apart. I generally feel inclined to fight very shy of eccentricity, and have no small horror of being thought eccentric myself, by which observation I don't mean to insinuate that I class myself under the head clever. God knows a more consummate ass in sundry important points has seldom browsed the green herb of His bounties than I. O Lord, Nell, I'm in danger sometimes of falling into self-weariness. I used to say and to think in former times that X— would certainly be married. I am not so sanguine on that point now. It will never suit her to accept a husband she cannot love, or at least respect, and it appears there are many chances against her meeting with such a one under favorable circumstances; besides, from all I can hear and see, money seems to be regarded as almost the Alpha and Omega of requisites in a wife. Well, if she is destined to be an old maid I don't think she will be a repining one. I think she will find resources in her own mind and disposition which will help her to get on. As to society, I don't understand much about it, but from the few glimpses I have had of its machinery it seems to me to be a very strange, complicated affair indeed, wherein nature is turned upside down. Your well-bred people appear to me, figuratively speaking, to walk on their heads, to see everything the wrong way up—a lie is with them truth, truth a lie, eternal and tedious botheration is their notion of happiness, sensible pursuits their *ennui*. But this may be only the view ignorance takes of what

it cannot understand. I refrain from judging them, therefore, but if I was called upon to *swoop*—you know the word I suppose—to swoop tastes and ideas and feelings with—for instance, I should prefer walking into a good Yorkshire kitchen fire and concluding the bargain at once by an act of voluntary combustion.

VII.

THE reader has seen that it was not the degradation of Branwell Brontë which formed the turning-point in Charlotte's life. Mrs. Gaskell, anxious to support her own conception of what *should have been* Charlotte's feelings with regard to her brother's ruin, has scarcely done justice either to herself or to her heroine. Thus she makes use of a passage in one of the letters quoted in the foregoing chapter, but in doing so omits what are perhaps the most characteristic words in it. "He" (Branwell) "has written this morning expressing some sense of contrition; . . . but as long as he remains at home I scarce dare hope for peace in the house." This is the form in which the passage appears in the "Biography," whereas Charlotte had written of her brother's having expressed "contrition for his frantic folly," and of his having "promised amendment on his return." Mrs. Gaskell could not bring herself to speak of such flagrant sins as those of which young Brontë had been guilty under the name of "folly," nor could she conceive that there was any possibility of amendment on the part of one who had fallen so low in vice. Moreover one of her objects was to punish those who had shared the lad's misconduct, and to whom she openly attributed not only his ruin but the premature deaths of his sisters. Thus she felt compelled to take throughout her book a far deeper and more tragic view of this miserable episode in the Brontë story than Charlotte herself took. Having read all her letters written at this period of her life to her two most confidential friends, I am justified in saying that the impression produced on Charlotte by Branwell's degrading fall was not so deep as that which was produced on Mrs. Gaskell, who never saw young Brontë, by the mere recital of the story. Yet Charlotte, though too brave, healthy, and reasonable in all things to be utterly weighed down by the fact that her brother had fallen a victim to loathsome vice, was far from being insensible to the sadness and shamefulness of his condition. What she thought of it she has herself told the world in the story of "The Professor" (p. 198):—

Limited as had yet been my experience of life, I had once had the opportunity of contemplating near at hand an example of the results produced by a course of interesting and romantic domestic treachery. No golden halo of fiction was about this example; I saw it bare and real, and it was very loathsome. I saw a mind degraded by the practice of mean subterfuge, by the habit of perfidious deception, and a body depraved by the infectious influence of the vice-polluted soul. I had suffered much from the forced and prolonged view of this spectacle; those sufferings I did not now regret, for their simple recollection acted as a most wholesome antidote to temptation. They had inscribed on my reason the conviction that unlawful pleasure, trenching on another's rights, is delusive and envenomed pleasure—its hollowness disappoints at the time, its poison cruelly tortures afterwards, its effects deprave forever.

Upon the gentle and sensitive mind of Anne Brontë the effects of Branwell's fall were such as Mrs. Gaskell depicts. She was literally broken down by the grief she suffered in seeing her brother's ruin; but Charlotte and Emily were of stronger fibre than their sister, and their predominant feeling, as expressed in their letters, is one of sheer disgust at their brother's weakness, and of indignation against all who had in any way assisted in his downfall. This may not be consistent with the popular conception of Charlotte's character, but it is strictly true.

We must then dismiss from our minds the notion that the brother's fate exercised that paramount influence over the sisters' lives which seems to be believed. Yet as we have seen, there was a very strong, though hidden influence working in Charlotte during those years in which their home was darkened by Branwell's presence. Her yearning for Brussels, and the life that now seemed like a vanished dream, continued almost as strong as ever. At Haworth everything was dull, commonplace, monotonous. The school-keeping scheme had failed; poverty and obscurity seemed henceforth to be the appointed lot of all the sisters. Even the resource of intercourse with friends was almost entirely cut off; for Charlotte could not bear the shame of exposing the prodigal of the family to the gaze of strangers. It was at this time, and in the mood described in the last letter quoted in the preceding chapter, that she took up her pen and sought to escape from the narrow and sordid cares which environed her by a flight into the region of poetry. She had been accustomed from childhood to write verses, few of which as yet had passed the limits

of mediocrity. Now, with all that heart-history through which she had passed at Brussels weighing upon her, she began to write again, moved by a stronger impulse, stirred by deeper thoughts than any she had known before. In this secret exercise of her faculties she found relief and enjoyment; her letters to her friend showed that her mind was regaining its tone, and the dreary outlook from "the hills of Judæa" at Haworth began to brighten. It was a great day in the lives of all the sisters when Charlotte accidentally discovered that Emily also had dared to "commit her soul to paper." The younger sister was keenly troubled when Charlotte made the discovery, for her poems had been written in absolute secrecy. But mutual confessions hastened her reconciliation. Charlotte produced her own poems, and then Anne also, blushing as was her wont, poured some hidden treasures of the same kind into the eldest sister's lap. So it came to pass that in 1846, unknown to their nearest friends, they presented to the world—at their own cost and risk, poor souls!—that thin volume of poetry "by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell," now almost forgotten, the merits of which few readers have recognized and few critics proclaimed.

Strong, calm, sincere, most of these poems are; not the spasmodic or frothy outpourings of Byron-stricken girls; not even mere echoes, however skilful, of the grand music of the masters. When we dip into the pages of the book we see that these women write because they feel. They write because they have something to say; they write not for the world, but for themselves, each sister wrapping her own secret within her own soul. Strangely enough it is not Charlotte who carries off the palm in these poems. Verse seems to have been too narrow for the limits of her genius; she could not soar as she desired to do within the self-imposed restraints of rhythm, rhyme, and metre. Here and there, it is true, we come upon lines which flash upon us with the brilliant fire of genius; but upon the whole we need not wonder that Currer Bell achieved no reputation as a poet. Nor is Anne to be counted among great singers. Sweet indeed her verses are, radiant with the tenderness, resignation, and gentle humility which were the prominent features of her character. One or two of her little poems are now included in popular collections of hymns used in Yorkshire churches; but as a rule her compositions lack the vigorous life which belongs to those of her sis-

ters. It is Emily who takes the first place in this volume. Some of her poems have a lyrical beauty which haunts the mind ever after it has become acquainted with them ; others have a passionate emphasis, a depth of meaning, an intensity and gravity which are startling when we know who the singer is, and which furnish a key to many passages in "Wuthering Heights" which the world shudders at and hastily passes by. Such lines as these ought to make the name of Emily Brontë far more familiar than it is to the students of our modern English literature :—

Death ! that struck when I was most confiding
In my certain faith of joy to be—
Strike again, time's withered branch dividing
From the fresh root of eternity !

Leaves upon time's branch were growing
brightly,

Full of sap and full of silver dew ;
Birds beneath its shelter gathered nightly ;
Daily round its flowers the wild bees flew.

Sorrow passed, and plucked the golden blos-
som ;

Guilt stripped off the foliage in its pride ;
But within its parent's kindly bosom
Flowed forever life's restoring tide.

Little mourned I for the parted gladness,
For the vacant nest and silent song —
Hope was there, and laughed me out of sad-
ness ;

Whispering, " Winter will not linger long ! "

And behold ! with tenfold increase blessing,
Spring adorned the beauty-burdened spray ;
Wind and rain and fervent heat, caressing,
Lavished glory on that second May !

High it rose — no winged grief could sweep
it ;

Sin was scared to distance with its slime ;
Love, and its own life, had power to keep it
From all wrong — from every blight but
thine ;

Cruel death ! The young leaves droop and
languish ;

Evening's gentle air may still restore —
No ! the morning sunshine mocks my an-
guish —

Time, for me, must never blossom more !

Strike it down, that other boughs may flourish
Where that perished sapling used to be ;
Thus at least its mouldering corpse will
nourish

That from which it sprung — eternity.

The little book was a failure. This first flight ended only in discomfiture ; and Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell were once more left to face the realities of life in Haworth parsonage, uncheered by literary

success. This was in the summer and autumn of 1846; about which time they were compelled to think of cares which came even nearer home than the failure of their volume of poems. Their father's eyesight was now almost gone, and all their thoughts were centred upon the operation which was to restore it. Yet at the very time when they were thus beset by bitter anxieties they were engaged in another and more important literary venture. The pen once taken up could not be laid down. By poetry they had only lost money ; but the idea had occurred to them that by prose-writing money was to be made. At any rate in telling the stories of imaginary people, in opening their hearts freely upon all those subjects on which they had thought deeply in their secluded lives, they would find relief from the solitude of Haworth. Each of the three accordingly began to write a novel. The stories were commenced simultaneously, after a long consultation, in which the outlines of the plots, and even the names of the different characters, were settled. How one must wish that some record of that strange literary council had been preserved ! Charlotte, in after life, spoke always tenderly, lovingly, almost reverentially, of the days in which she and her well-beloved sisters were engaged in settling the plan and style of their respective romances. That time seemed sacred to her, and though she learnt to smile at the illusions under which the work was begun, and could see clearly enough the errors and crudities of thought and method which all three displayed, she never allowed any one in her presence to question the genius of Emily and Anne, or to ridicule the prosaic and business-like fashion in which the novel-writing was undertaken by the three sisters. Returning to the old customs of their childhood, they sat round the table of their sitting-room in the parsonage, each busy with her pen. No trace of their occupation at this time is to be found in their letters, and on the rare occasions on which the father or the brother came into their room, nothing was said as to the work that was going on. The novel-writing, like the writing and publishing of the poems, was still kept profoundly secret. "There is no gentleman of the name in this parish," said Mr. Brontë to the village postman, when the latter ventured to ask who the Mr. Currer Bell could be for whom letters came so frequently from London. But every night the three sisters, as they paced the barely-furnished room, or strained their eyes

across the tombstones, to the spot where the weather-stained church-tower rose from a bank of nettles, told each other what the work of the day had been, and criticised each other's labors with the freedom of that perfect love which casts out all fear of misconception. Is it needful to tell how the three stories—"The Professor," "Wuthering Heights," and "Agnes Grey,"—are sent forth at last from the little station at Keighley to fare as best they may in that unknown London which is still an ideal city to the sisters, peopled not with ordinary human beings, but with creatures of some strangely different order? Can any one be ignorant of the weary months which passed whilst "The Professor" was going from hand to hand, and the stories written by Emily and Anne were waiting in a publisher's desk until they could be given to the world on the publisher's own terms? Charlotte had failed, but the brave heart was not to be baffled. No sooner had the last page of "The Professor" been finished than the first page of "Jane Eyre" was begun. The whole of that wondrous story passed through the author's busy brain whilst the life around her was clad in these sombre hues, and disappointment, affliction, and gloomy forebodings were her daily companions. The decisive rejection of her first tale by Messrs. Smith, Elder, and Co. had been accompanied by some kindly words of advice; so it is to that firm that she now entrusts the completed manuscript of "Jane Eyre." The result has already been told. On August 24, 1847, the story is sent from Leeds to London; and before the year is out all England is ringing with the praises of the novel and its author.

Need I defend the sisters from the charge sometimes brought against them that they were unfaithful to their friends in not taking them into their confidence? Surely not. They had pledged themselves to each other that the secret should be sternly guarded, as something sacred, kept even from those of their own household. They were not working for fame; for again and again they give proof that personal fame is the last thing to which they aspire. But they had found their true vocation, the call to work was irresistible, they had obeyed it, and all that they sought now was to leave their work to speak for itself, disengaged absolutely from the humble personality of the authors.

In a letter from Anne Brontë, written in January, 1848, at which time the literary quidnuncs both of England and America

were eagerly discussing contradictory theories as to the authorship of "Jane Eyre," and of the two other stories which had appeared from the pens of Ellis and Acton Bell, I find the following passage: "I have no news to tell you, for we have been nowhere, seen no one, and done nothing (*to speak of*) since you were here, and yet we contrive to be busy from morning till night." The gentle and scrupulously conscientious girl, whilst hiding the secret from her friend, cannot violate the truth even by a hair's breadth. The italics are her own. Nothing *that can be spoken of* has been done. The friend had her own suspicions. Staying in a southern house for the winter, the new novel about which everybody was talking was produced—fresh from town. One of the guests was deputed to read it aloud, and before she had proceeded far Charlotte Brontë's schoolfellow had pierced the secret of the authorship. Three months before, Charlotte had been spending a few days at Miss N——'s house, and had openly corrected the proof-sheets of the story in the presence of her hostess; but she had given the latter no encouragement to speak to her on the subject, and nothing had been said. Now, however, in the surprise of the moment Miss N—— told the company that this must have been written by Miss Brontë, and astute friends at once advised her not to mention the fact that she knew the author of "Jane Eyre" to any one, as her acquaintance with such a person would be regarded as a reflection on her own character! When Charlotte was challenged by her friend, she uttered stormy denials in general terms which carried a complete confirmation of the truth, and when, in the spring of 1848, Miss N—— visited Haworth, full confession was made, and the poems brought forth and shown to her, in addition to the stories.

Very quietly and sedately did "Curer Bell" take her sudden change of fortune. She corresponded freely with her publishers, and with the critics who had written to her concerning her book; she told her father the secret of her authorship, and exhibited to him the draft which was the substantial recompense of her labors; but in her letters to her friend no difference of tone is to be detected. Success was very sweet to her, as we know, but she bore her honors meekly, betraying nothing of the gratified ambition which must have filled her soul. In truth her thoughts were soon turned from her literary triumph to more pressing matters nearer

home. It was after one brief visit to London, accompanied by Anne, to satisfy her publishers that Currer Bell was a distinct individuality not to be confounded with either Ellis or Acton, that she returned home to find that death was setting its seal upon the household. Branwell, who had been so long the dark shadow in their "humble home," was taken from them without any lengthened preliminary warning. Sharing to the full the eccentricity of the family, he resolved to die as nobody else had ever died before, and when the last agony came on, he rose to his feet, as though proudly defying death itself to do its worst, and expired standing. In the following letter, hitherto unpublished, to one of her friends — not to her old school-fellow — Charlotte thus speaks of the last act in the tragedy of her brother's life : —

HAWORTH, October 14, 1848.

The event to which you allude came upon us indeed with startling suddenness, and was a severe shock to us all. My poor brother has long had a shaken constitution, and during the summer his appetite had been diminished and he had seemed weaker, but neither we, nor himself, nor any medical man who was consulted on his case thought it one of immediate danger : he was out of doors two days before his death, and was only confined to bed one single day. I thank you for your kind sympathy. Many, under the circumstances, would think our loss rather a relief than otherwise ; in truth, we must acknowledge, in all humility and gratitude, that God has greatly tempered judgment with mercy ; but yet, as you doubtless know from experience, the last earthly separation cannot take place between near relations without the keenest pangs on the part of the survivors. Every wrong and sin is forgotten then ; pity and grief share the heart and the memory between them. Yet we are not without comfort in our affliction. A most propitious change marked the few last days of poor Branwell's life ; his demeanor, his language, his sentiments, were all singularly altered and softened, and this change could not be owing to the fear of death, for within half an hour of his decease he seemed unconscious of danger. In God's hands we leave him ! He sees not as man sees. Papa, I am thankful to say, has borne the event pretty well. His distress was great at first. To lose an only son is no ordinary trial. But his physical strength has not hitherto failed him, and he has now in a great measure recovered his mental composure ; my dear sisters are pretty well also. Unfortunately illness attacked me at the crisis, when strength was most needed ; I bore up for a day or two, hoping to be better, but got worse ; fever, sickness, total loss of appetite and internal pain, were the symptoms. The doctor pronounced it to be bilious fever — but I

think it must have been in a mitigated form ; it yielded to medicine and care in a few days ; I was only confined to my bed a week, and am, I trust, nearly well now. I felt it a grievous thing to be incapacitated from action and effort at a time when action and effort were most called for. The past month seems an overclouded period in my life.

Alas ! the brave woman who felt it to be "a grievous thing" that she could not bear her full share of the family burden, little knew how terribly that burden was to be increased, how much heavier and blacker were the clouds which awaited her than any through which she had yet passed. The storm which even then was gathering upon her path was one which no sunshine of fame or prosperity could dissipate. The one to whom Charlotte's heart had always clung most fondly, the sister who had been nearest to her in age and nearest to her in affection, Emily, the brilliant but ill-fated child of genius, began to fade. "She had never," says Charlotte, speaking in the solitude of her fame, "linger'd over any task in her life, and she did not linger now." Yet the quick decline of Emily Brontë is one of the saddest of all the sad features of the story. I have spoken of her reserve. So intense was it that when dying she refused to admit even to her own sisters that she was ill. They saw her fading before their eyes ; they knew that the grave was yawning at her feet ; and yet they dared not offer her any attention such as an invalid needed, and such as they were longing to bestow upon her. It was the cruellest torture of Charlotte's life. During the brief period of Emily's illness, her sister writes as follows to her friend : —

I mentioned your coming to Emily as a mere suggestion, with the faint hope that the prospect might cheer her, as she really esteems you perhaps more than any other person out of this house. I found, however, it would not do ; any the slightest excitement or putting out of the way, is not to be thought of, and indeed I do not think the journey in this unsettled weather, with the walk from Keighley and back, at all advisable for yourself. Yet I should have liked to see you, and so would Anne. Emily continues much the same : yesterday I thought her a little better, but to-day she is not so well. I hope still, for I must hope ; she is as dear to me as life. If I let the faintness of despair reach my heart I shall become worthless. The attack was, I believe, in the first place inflammation of the lungs ; it ought to have been met promptly in time ; but she would take no care, use no means, she is too intractable. I do wish I knew her state and feelings more clearly. The

fever is not so high as it was, but the pain in the side, the cough, the emaciation are there still.

The days went by in the parsonage, slowly, solemnly, each bringing some fresh burden of sorrow to the broken hearts of Charlotte and Anne. Emily's resolute spirit was unbending to the last. Day after day she refused to own that she was ill, refused to take rest or medicine or stimulants; compelled her trembling hands to labor as of old. And so came the bitter morning in December, the story of which has been told by Mrs. Gaskell with simple pathos, when she "arose and dressed herself as usual, making many a pause, but doing everything for herself," even going on with her sewing as at any time during the years past; until suddenly she laid the unfinished work aside, whispered faintly to her sister, "If you send for a doctor I will see him now," and in two hours passed quietly away.

The broken father, supported on either side by his surviving daughters, followed Emily to her grave in the old church. There was one other mourner — the fierce old dog whom she had loved better almost than any other human being.

Yes [says Charlotte, writing to her friend], there is no Emily in time or on earth now. Yesterday we put her poor wasted mortal frame quietly under the church pavement. We are very calm at present. Why should we be otherwise? The anguish of seeing her suffer is over. We feel she is at peace. No need now to tremble for the hard frost and the keen wind. Emily does not feel them. She died in a time of promise. We saw her taken from life in its prime. But it is God's will, and the place where she is gone is better than that she has left.

It was in the very month of December, 1848, when Charlotte passed through this fierce ordeal, and wrote these tender words of love and resignation, that the *Quarterly Review* denounced her as an improper woman who "for some sufficient reason" had forfeited the society of her sex!

Terrible was the storm of death which in three short months swept off two of the little household at Haworth; but it had not even yet exhausted all its fury. Scarcely had Emily been laid in the grave than Anne, the youngest and gentlest of the three sisters, began to fade. Very slowly did she droop. The winter passed away, and the spring came with a glimmer of hope; but the following unpublished letter, written on the 16th of May, shows with what fears Charlotte set forth on that

visit to Scarborough which her sister insisted upon undertaking as a last resource: —

Next Wednesday is the day fixed for our departure; Ellen accompanies us at her own kind and friendly wish. I would not refuse her society, but dared not urge her to go, for I have little hope that the excursion will be one of pleasure or benefit to those engaged in it. Anne is extremely weak. She herself has a fixed impression that the sea air will give her a chance of regaining strength. That chance therefore she must have. Having resolved to try the experiment, misgivings are useless, and yet when I look at her misgivings will rise. She is more emaciated than Emily was at the very last, her breath scarcely serves her to mount the stairs, however slowly. She sleeps very little at night, and often passes most of the forenoon in a semi-lethargic state. Still she is up all day, and even goes out a little when it is fine. Fresh air usually acts as a temporary stimulus, but its reviving power diminishes.

Just two weeks after this Anne died at Scarborough, rendering up her soul with that sweetness and resignation of spirit which had adorned her throughout her brief life, and even in the last hour crying, "Take courage, Charlotte, take courage," as she bade farewell to the sister who was left.

Before me lie the few letters which remain of Emily and Anne. There is little in them worth preserving. Both make reference to the fact that Charlotte is the great correspondent of the family, and that their brief and uninteresting epistles can have no charm for one who is constantly receiving letters from her. Yet that modest reserve which distinguished the greatest of the three is plainly visible in what little remains of the correspondence of the others. They had discovered before their death the real power that lay within them; they had just experienced the joy which comes from the exercise of these powers; they had looked forward to a future which should be sunny and prosperous, as no other part of their lives of toil and patient endurance had been. Suddenly death confronted them, and they recognized the fact that they must leave their work undone. Each faced the dread enemy in her own way, but neither shrank even from that blow. Emily's proud spirit refused to be conquered, and, as we have seen, up to the last agony she carried herself as one sternly indifferent to the weaknesses of the flesh, including that final weakness which must conquer all of us in the end. Anne found consolation, pure and deep, in her religious faith, and she died cheerfully

in the firm belief that she was but entering upon that fuller life which lay beyond the grave. The one was defiant, the other resigned; but courage and fortitude were shown by each in accordance with her own special idiosyncracy.

VIII.

CHARLOTTE went back from Scarborough to Haworth alone. Her father met her with unwonted demonstrations of affection, and she "tried to be glad" that she was once more under the familiar roof. "But this time joy was not to be the sensation." Yet the courage which had held her sisters to the end supported her amid the pangs of loneliness and bereavement. Even now there was no bitterness, no morbid gloom in the heart which had suffered so keenly. Setting aside her own sorrow quietly but resolutely, refusing all the invitations of her friend to seek temporary relief in change of scene, she sat down to complete the story which was intended to tell the world what the lost Emily had seemed to be in the eyes of her fond sister. By herself, in the room in which a short year ago three happy sisters had worked together, within the walls which could never again echo with the old voices, or walking on the moors, which would never more be trodden by the firm, elastic step of Emily, she composed the brilliant story of "Shirley"—the brightest and healthiest of her works. As she writes she sometimes sends forth messages to those who love her, which tell us of the spirit of the hero or the martyr burning within the frail frame of the solitary woman. "Submission, courage, exertion when practicable, these seem to be the weapons with which we must fight life's long battle;" and that these are no mere words she proves with all her accustomed honesty and sincerity, by acting up to them to the very letter. But at times the burden presses upon her till it is almost past endurance. Strangely enough, it is a comparative trifle, as the world counts it, the illness of a servant, that occasions her fiercest outburst of open grief:—

You have to fight your way through labor and difficulty at home, it appears, but I am truly glad now you did not come to Haworth. As matters have turned out you would have found only discomfort and gloom. Both Tabby and Martha are at this moment ill in bed. Martha's illness has been most serious. She was seized with internal inflammation ten days ago; Tabby's lame leg has broken out, she cannot stand or walk. I have one of Martha's sisters to help me, and her mother

comes up sometimes. There was one day last week when I fairly broke down for ten minutes, and sat down and cried like a fool. Martha's illness was at its height; a cry from Tabby had called me into the kitchen, and I had found her laid on the floor, her head under the kitchen-grate. She had fallen from her chair in attempting to rise. Papa had just been declaring that Martha was in imminent danger; I was myself depressed with headache and sickness that day; I hardly knew what to do or where to turn. Thank God, Martha is now convalescent; Tabby, I trust, will be better soon. Papa is pretty well. I have the satisfaction of knowing that my publishers are delighted with what I sent them—this supports me, but life is a battle. May we all be enabled to fight it well.

This letter is dated September 24, 1849, at which time "Shirley" is written, and in the hands of her publishers. She has painted the character of Emily in that of Shirley herself; and her friend Ellen is shadowed forth to the world in the person of Caroline Helston. When the book, with its vivid pictures of Yorkshire life at the beginning of the century, and its masterly sketches of character as real as those which Shakespeare brings upon the stage, is published, there is but one outcry of praise, even from the critics who were so eager to condemn "Jane Eyre." Up to this point she had preserved her anonymity, but now she is discovered, and her admirers in London persuade her at last to visit them, and make acquaintance with her peers in the republic of letters, the men and women whose names were household words in Haworth parsonage long before "Currier Bell" had made her first modest appeal to the world.

A passage from one of the following letters, written during this first sojourn in London, has already been published; but it will well bear repeating:—

December, 1849.

I have just remembered that as you do not know my address you cannot write to me till you get it. I came to this big Babylon last Thursday, and have been, in what seems to me, a sort of whirl ever since; for changes, scenes, and stimulus which would be a trifling to others are much to me. I found when I mentioned to Mr. —— my plan of going to Dr. ——'s, it would not do at all. He would have been seriously hurt: he made his mother write to me, and thus I was persuaded to make my principal stay at his house. So far I have found no reason to regret this decision. Mrs. —— received me at first like one who has had the strictest orders to be scrupulously attentive. I had fire in my bedroom evening and morning, two wax candles, etc., and Mrs. —— and her daughters seemed to look on me with

a mixture of respect and alarm. But all this is changed; that is to say, the attention and politeness continue as great as ever, but the alarm and estrangement are quite gone; she treats me as if she liked me, and I begin to like her much. Kindness is a potent heart-winner. I had not judged too favorably of — on a first impression—he pleases me much: I like him better as a son and brother than as a man of business. Mr. W— too is really most gentlemanly and well-informed; his weak points he certainly has, but these are not seen in society. Mr. X— (the little man) has again shown his parts. Of him I have not yet come to a clear decision. Abilities he has, for he rules his firm and keeps forty young men under strict control by his iron will. His young superior likes him, which, to speak the truth, is more than I do at present. In fact I suspect he is of the Helston order of men, rigid, despotic, and self-willed. He tries to be very kind, and even to express sympathy sometimes, and he does not manage it. He has a determined, dreadful nose in the middle of his face, which when poked into my countenance cuts into my soul like iron. Still he is horribly intelligent, quick, searching, sagacious, and with a memory of relentless tenacity: to turn to — after him is to turn from granite to easy down or warm fur. I have seen Thackeray.

As to being happy, I am under scenes and circumstances of excitement, but I suffer acute pain sometimes—mental pain, I mean. At the moment Mr. Thackeray presented himself I was thoroughly faint from inanition, having eaten nothing since a very slight breakfast, and it was then seven o'clock in the evening. Excitement and exhaustion together made savage work of me that evening. What he thought of me, I cannot tell. This evening I am going to meet Miss Martineau—she has written to me most kindly—she knows me only as Currier Bell—I am going alone—how I shall get on I do not know. If Mrs. — were not kind, I should sometimes be miserable; but she treats me almost affectionately, her attentions never flag. I have seen many things; I hope some day to tell you what. Yesterday I went over the new Houses of Parliament with Mr. —. An attack of rheumatic fever has kept poor Mr. X— out of the way since I wrote last. I am sorry for his sake. It grows quite dark. I must stop, I shall not stay in London a day longer than I first intended. On those points I form my resolutions, and will not be shaken. The thundering *Times* has attacked me savagely.

The following letters (with one exception not previously published) belong to the spring of 1850, when Charlotte was at home again, engaged in attending to her father and to the household cares which shared her attention with literary work and anxieties. The first, which refers exclusively to her visit to London, was

addressed to one of her old friends in Yorkshire:—

Ellen it seems told you that I spent a fortnight in London last December. They wished me very much to stay a month, alleging that I should in that time be able to secure a complete circle of acquaintance; but I found a fortnight of such excitement quite enough: the whole day was usually devoted to sightseeing, and often the evening was spent in society: it was more than I could bear for any length of time. On one occasion I met a party of my critics—seven of them. Some of them had been my bitter foes in print, but they were prodigiously civil face to face. These gentlemen seemed infinitely grander, more pompous, dashing, showy than the few authors I saw. Mr. Thackeray, for example, is a man of very quiet, simple demeanor; he is however looked upon with some awe and even distrust. His conversation is very peculiar, too perverse to be pleasant. It was proposed to me to see Charles Dickens, Lady Morgan, Mesdames Trollope, Gore, and some others; but I was aware these introductions would bring a degree of notoriety I was not disposed to encounter; I declined therefore with thanks. Nothing charmed me more during my stay in town than the pictures I saw; one or two private collections of Turner's best water-colors were indeed a treat. His later oil paintings are strange things—things that baffle description. I have twice seen Macready act, once in "Macbeth" and once in "Othello," I astounded a dinner party by honestly saying I did not like him. It is the fashion to rave about his splendid acting; anything more false and artificial, less genuinely impressive than his whole style, I could scarcely have imagined. The fact is the stage system altogether is hollow nonsense. They act farces well enough; the actors comprehend their parts and do them justice. They comprehend nothing about tragedy or Shakespeare, and it is a failure. I said so, and by so saying produced a blank silence, a mute consternation. I was indeed obliged to dissent on many occasions; and to offend by dissenting. It seems now very much the custom to admire a certain wordy, intricate, obscure style of poetry, such as Elizabeth Barrett Browning writes. Some pieces were referred to, about which Currier Bell was expected to be very rapturous, and failing in this, he disappointed. London people strike a provincial as being very much taken up with little matters, about which no one out of particular town circles cares much. They talk, too, of persons, literary men and women, whose names are scarcely heard in the country, and in whom you cannot get up an interest. I think I should scarcely like to live in London, and were I obliged to live there I should certainly go little into company—especially I should eschew the literary critics.

I have, since you went, had a remarkable epistle from Thackeray, long, interesting,

characteristic; but it unfortunately concludes with the strict injunction, *Show this letter to no one*. Adding that if he thought his letters were seen by others, he should either cease to write, or write only what was conventional. But for this circumstance I should have sent it with the others. I answered it at length. Whether my reply will give satisfaction or displeasure remains yet to be ascertained. Thackeray's feelings are not such as can be gauged by ordinary calculation: variable weather is what I should ever expect from that quarter. Yet in correspondence, as in verbal intercourse, this would torment me.

I believe I should have written to you before, but I don't know what heaviness of spirit has beset me of late, made my faculties dull, made rest weariness, and occupation burdensome. Now and then the silence of the house, the solitude of the room has pressed on me with a weight I found it difficult to bear, and recollection has not failed to be as alert, poignant, obtrusive, as other feelings were languid. I attribute this state of things partly to the weather. Quicksilver invariably falls low in storms and high winds, and I have ere this been warned of approaching disturbance in the atmosphere by a sense of bodily weakness, and deep, heavy mental sadness, which some would call *presentiment*. Presentiment indeed it is, but not at all supernatural. The Haworth people have been making great fools of themselves about "Shirley," they take it in the enthusiastic light. When they got the volumes at the Mechanics' Institution, all the members wanted them; they cast lots for the whole three, and whoever got a volume was only allowed to keep it two days and to be fined a shilling *per diem* for longer detention. It would be mere nonsense and vanity to tell you what they say. I have had no letters from London for a long time, and am very much ashamed of myself to find, now when that stimulus is withdrawn, how dependent upon it I had become. I cannot help feeling something of the excitement of expectation till post-hour comes, and when day after day it brings nothing, I get low. This is a stupid, disgraceful, unmeaning state of things. I feel bitterly enraged at my own dependence and folly. It is so bad for the mind to be quite alone, to have none with whom to talk over little crosses and disappointments, and laugh them away. If I could write I daresay I should be better, but I cannot write a line. However (D.V.) I shall contend against the idiocy. I had rather a foolish letter from Miss — the other day. Some things in it nettled me, especially an unnecessarily earnest assurance that in spite of all I had gone and done in the writing line I still retained a place in her esteem. My answer took strong and high ground at once. I said I had been troubled by no doubts on the subject, that I neither did myself nor her the injustice to suppose there was anything in what I had written to incur the just forfeiture of esteem. I was aware, I intimated, that some persons thought proper

to take exceptions at "Jane Eyre," and that for their own sakes I was sorry, as I invariably found them individuals in whom the animal largely predominated over the intellectual, persons by nature coarse, by inclination sensual, whatever they might be by education and principle.

I inclose a slip of newspaper for your amusement. Me it both amused and touched, for it alludes to some who are in this world no longer. It is an extract from an American paper, and is written by an emigrant from Haworth. You will find it a curious mixture of truth and inaccuracy. Return it when you write again. I also send you for perusal an opinion of "Jane Eyre," written by a *working-man* in this village; rather, I should say, a record of the feelings the book excited in the poor fellow's mind; it was not written for my inspection, nor does the writer now know that his little document has by intricate ways come into my possession, and I have forced those who gave it to promise that they will never inform him of this circumstance. He is a modest, thoughtful, feeling, reading being, to whom I have spoken perhaps about three times in the course of my life; his delicate health renders him incapable of hard or close labor; he and his family are often under the pressure of want. He feared that if Miss Brontë saw what he had written, she would laugh it to scorn. But Miss Brontë considers it one of the highest, because one of the most truthful and artless tributes her work has yet received. You must return this likewise. I do you great honor in showing it to you.

Once more we can see that the healthy, happy interest she takes in the welfare of others is beginning to assert itself. For a time, under the keen smart of the wounds death had inflicted on her, she had found little heart to discuss the affairs of her circle of friends in her correspondence; but now the outer world vindicates its claim to her renewed attention, and she again begins to discuss and analyze the characters of her acquaintances with a skill and minuteness which make them as interesting even to strangers as any of the most closely-studied characters of fiction can be.

I return Q—'s letter. The business is a most unpleasant one to be concerned in. It seems to me now altogether unworthy in its beginning, progress, and ending. Q— is the only pure thing about it; she stands between her coarse father and cold, unloving suitor, like innocence between a pair of world-hardened knaves. The comparison seems rather hard to be applied to V—, but as I see him now he merits it. If V— has no means of keeping a wife, if he does not possess a sixpence he is sure of, how can he think of marrying a woman from whom he cannot expect she should work to keep herself? V—'s

want of candor, the twice-falsified account he gave of the matter, tells painfully and deeply against him. It shows a glimpse of his hidden motives such as I refrain from describing in words. After all he is perhaps only like the majority of men. Certainly those men who lead a gay life in their youth, and arrive at middle life with feelings blunted and passions exhausted, can have but one aim in marriage — the selfish advancement of their interest. And to think that such men take as wives — as second selves — women young, modest, sincere, pure in heart and life, with feelings all fresh and emotions all unworn, and bind such virtue and vitality to their own withered existence, such sincerity to their own hollowness, such disinterestedness to their own haggard avarice ! to think this, troubles the soul to its inmost depths. Nature and justice forbid the banns of such wedlock. This note is written under excitement. Q—'s letter seems to have lifted so fraudulent a veil, and to show both father and suitor lurking behind in shadow so dark, acting from motives so poor and low, so conscious of each other's littleness, and consequently so destitute of mutual respect ! These things incense me, but I shall cool down.

I cannot find your last letter to refer to, and therefore this will be no answer to it. You must write again, by return of post if possible, and let me know how you are progressing. What you said in your last confirmed my opinion that your late attack had been coming on for a long time. Your wish for a cold-water bath, etc., is, I should think, the result of fever. Almost every one has complained lately of some tendency to slow fever. I have felt it in frequent thirst and in frequent appetite. Papa too, and even Martha, have complained. I fear this damp weather will scarcely suit you ; but write and say all. Of late I have had many letters to answer ; and some very bothering ones from people who want opinions about their books, who seek acquaintance, and who flatter to get it ; people who utterly mistake all about me. They are most difficult to answer, put off, and appease, without offending ; for such characters are excessively touchy, and when affronted turn malignant. Their books are too often deplorable.

In June, 1850, she is induced to pay another visit to London, going upon this occasion whilst the season is at its height, though she has stipulated before going that she is "not to be lionized."

I came to London last Thursday. I am staying at —. Here I feel very comfortable. Mrs. — treats me with a serene, equable kindness which just suits me. Her son is as before — genial and friendly. I have seen very few persons, and am not likely to see many, as the agreement was that I was to be very quiet. We have been to the exhibition of the Royal Academy, to the opera, and the Zoological Gardens. The weather is splendid,

I shall not stay longer than a fortnight in London ; the feverishness and exhaustion beset me somewhat, but I think not quite so badly as before — as indeed I have not yet been so much tired.

I am leaving London if all be well on Tuesday, and shall be very glad to come to you for a few days if that arrangement still remains convenient to you. My London visit has much surpassed my expectations this time. I have suffered less, and enjoyed more than before ; rather a trying termination yet remains to me. Mrs. —'s youngest son is at school in Scotland, and her eldest is going to fetch him home for the vacation. The other evening he announced his intention of taking one of his sisters with him, and the evening after he further proposed that Miss Brontë should go down to Edinburgh and join them there, and see that city and its suburbs. I concluded he was joking, laughed and declined. However, it seems he was in earnest, and being always accustomed to have his will, he brooks opposition ill. The thing appearing to me perfectly out of the question, I still refused. Mrs. — did not at all favor it, but her worthy son only waxed more determined. This morning she came and entreated me to go ; G— wished it so much, he had begged her to use her influence, etc., etc. Now, I believe that he and I understand each other very well, and respect each other very sincerely. We both know the wide breach time has made between us. We do not embarrass each other, or very rarely. My six or eight years of seniority, to say nothing of lack of all pretensions to beauty, etc., are a perfect safeguard. I should not in the least fear to go with him to China. I like to see him pleased. I greatly dislike to ruffle and disappoint him ; so he shall have his mind, and if all be well I mean to join him in Edinburgh, after I have spent a few days with you. With his buoyant animal spirits and youthful vigor he will make severe demands on my muscles and nerves ; but I daresay I shall get through somehow.

IX.

CHARLOTTE BRONTE'S letters during 1850 and 1851 are among the most valuable illustrations of the true character of the woman which we possess. Stricken as she had been by the successive bereavements which had robbed her of her dearest friends and companions, and left her the sole prop of the dull house on the moors and of its aged head, she had yet recovered much of her peace of mind and even of her vitality and cheerfulness. She had now, also, begun to see something of life as it is presented, not to despised governesses, but to successful authoresses. Her visits to London had brought her into contact with some of the leaders of the literary world — who can have forgotten her interview with Thack-

eray, when she was "moved to speak to the giant of some of his shortcomings"? Haworth itself had become a point of attraction to curious persons, and not a few visitors found their way under one pretence or another to the old parsonage, to be received with effusive courtesy by Mr. Brontë, and with shy indifference by his daughter. Her correspondence, too, became widely spread among men and women of distinction in the world and in society. Altogether it was a different life upon which she now looked out from her remote eyrie among the hills — a life with many new interests in it, with much that was calculated to awaken chords in her heart hitherto untouched, and to bring to light new characteristics of her temper and genius. One would fain speculate upon what might have been, but for the desolation wrought in her home and heart by that tempest of death which raged during the autumn of 1848 and the spring of 1849. As it was no novelty could make her forget what had been; no new faces, however welcome, could dim the tender visions of the faces that were seen no more, or could weaken in any degree the affection with which she still clung to the friend of her school-days. Simplicity and sincerity are the prevailing features of her letters, during this critical time in her life, as during all the years which had preceded it. They reflect her mind in many moods; they show her in many different situations; but they never fail to give the impression of one whose allegiance to her own conscience and whose reverence for truth and purity remain now what they had been in her days of happy and unworldly obscurity. The letters I now quote are quite new to the public.

July 18th, 1850.

You must cheer up, for your letter proves to me that you are low-spirited. As for me, what I said is to be taken in this sense, — that, under the circumstances, it would be presumptuous in me to calculate on a long life — a truth obvious enough. For the rest, we are all in the hands of Him who apportions His gifts, health or sickness, length or brevity of days, as is best for the receiver: to him who has work to do time will be given in which to do it; for him to whom no task is assigned the season of rest will come earlier. As to the suffering preceding our last sleep, the sickness, decay, the struggle of flesh and spirit, it *must* come sooner or later to all. If, in one point of view, it is sad to have few ties in the world, in another point of view it is soothing; women who have husbands and children must look forward to death with more pain, more fear, than those who have none. To dismiss

the subject, I wish (without cant, and not in any hackneyed sense) that both you and I could always say in this matter, the will of God be done. I am beginning to get settled at home, but the solitude seems heavy as yet. It is a great change, but in looking forward I try to hope for the best. So little faith have I in the power of any temporary excitement to do real good that I put off day by day writing to London to tell them I have come home; and till then it was agreed I should not hear from them. It is painful to be dependent on the small stimulus letters give. I sometimes think I will renounce it altogether, close all correspondence on some quiet pretext, and cease to look forward at post-time for any letters but yours.

Sept. 14th, 1850.

I wish, dear Ellen, you would tell me what is the "twaddle" about my marrying, which you hear. If I knew the details I should have a better chance of guessing the quarter from which such gossip comes. As it is, I am quite at a loss. Whom am I to marry? I think I have scarcely seen a single man with whom such a union would be possible since I left London. Doubtless there are men whom, if I chose to encourage, I might marry. But no matrimonial lot is even remotely offered me which seems to me truly desirable. And even if that were the case there would be many obstacles. The least allusion to such a thing is most offensive to papa. An article entitled "Curer Bell" has lately appeared in the *Palladium*, a new periodical published in Edinburgh. It is an eloquent production, and one of such warm sympathy and high appreciation as I had never expected to see. It makes mistakes about authorship, etc., but those I hope on one day to set right. Mr. — (the little man) first informed me of this article. I was somewhat surprised to receive his letter, having concluded nine months ago that there would be no more correspondence from that quarter. I inclose a note from him received subsequently, in answer to my acknowledgment. Read it, and tell me exactly how it impresses you regarding the writer's character, etc. He is deficient neither in spirit nor sense.

Jan. 20th, 1851.

Thank you heartily for the two letters I owe you. You seem very gay at present, and provided you only take care not to catch cold with coming home at night, I am not sorry to hear it; a little movement, cheerfulness, stimulus is not only beneficial, but necessary. Your last letter but one made me smile. I think you draw great conclusions from small inferences. I think those "fixed intentions" you fancy are imaginary. I think the "under-current" amounts simply to this, a kind of natural liking and sense of something congenial. Were there no vast barrier of age, fortune, etc., there is perhaps enough personal regard to make things possible which now are impossible. If men and women married because they like each other's temper, look, conversa-

tion, nature, and so on—and if, besides, years were more nearly equal—the chance you allude to might be admitted as a chance; but other reasons regulate matrimony—reasons of convenience, of connection, of money. Meantime I am content to know him as a friend, and pray God to continue to me the common sense to look on one so young, so rising, and so hopeful in no other light. The hint about the Rhine disturbs me; I am not made of stone, and what is mere excitement to others is fever to me. However it is a matter for the future, and long to look forward to. As I see it now, the journey is out of the question—for many reasons—I rather wonder he should think of it. Good-bye. Heaven grant us both some quiet wisdom, and strength not merely to bear the trial of pain, but to resist the lure of pleasure when it comes in such a shape as our better judgment disapproves.

Feb. 26th, 1851.

You ought always to conclude that when I don't write it is simply because I have nothing particular to say. Be sure that ill news will travel fast enough, and good news too when such commodity comes. If I could often *be* or *seem* in brisk spirits, I might write oftener, knowing that my letters would amuse. But as times go, a glimpse of sunshine now and then is as much as one has a right to expect. However, I get on very decently. I am now and then tempted to break through my resolution of not having you to come before summer, and to ask you to come to this Patmos in a week or two. But it would be dull—very dull—for you. . . . What would you say to coming here the week after next to stay only just so long as you could comfortably bear the monotony? If the weather were dry, and the moors fine, I should not mind it so much—we could walk for change.

About this time it is clear that Miss Brontë was suffering from one of her periodical attacks of nervous exhaustion. She makes repeated references in her letters to her ailments, attributing them generally to her liver, and she also mentions frequently an occurrence which had given her not a little anxiety and concern. This was an offer of marriage from a business man in a good position, whom she had already met in London. The following letters, which are inserted here without regard to the precise date, and of which Mrs. Gaskell has merely used half-a-dozen lines, relate to this subject:—

You are to say no more about "Jupiter" and "Venus." What do you mean by such heathen trash? The fact is no fallacy can be wilder, and I won't have it hinted at, even in jest, because my common sense laughs it to scorn. The idea of X—shocks me less; it would be a more likely match, if "matches" were at all in question, *which they are not*. He still sends his little newspaper, and the

other day there came a letter of a bulk, volume, pith, judgment, and knowledge, worthy to have been the product of a giant.

X—has been, and is gone; things are just as they were. I only know, in addition to the slight information I possessed before, that this Australian undertaking is necessary to the continued prosperity of his firm, that he alone was pronounced to possess the power and means to carry it out successfully, that mercantile honor, combined with his own sense of duty, obliged him to accept the post of honor and of danger to which he has been appointed, that he goes with great personal reluctance, and that he contemplates an absence of five years. He looked much thinner and older. I saw him very near, and once through my glass. The resemblance to Branwell struck me forcibly; it is marked. He is not ugly, but very peculiar. The lines in his face show an inflexibility, and, I must add, a hardness of character, which does not attract. As he stood near me, as he looked at me in his keen way, it was all I could do to stand my ground tranquilly and steadily, and not to recoil as before. It is no use saying anything if I am not candid. I avow then that on this occasion, predisposed as I was to regard him very favorably, his manners and his personal appearance scarcely pleased me more than at the first interview. He gave me a book at parting, requesting in his brief way that I would keep it for his sake, and adding hastily, "I shall hope to hear from you in Australia; your letters *have* been and *will* be a greater refreshment than you can think or I tell." And so he is gone, and stern and abrupt little man as he is, too often jarring as are his manners, his absence and the exclusion of his idea from my mind, leave me certainly with less support and in deeper solitude than before. You see, dear Nell, we are still precisely on the same level. You are not isolated. I feel that there is a certain mystery about this transaction yet, and whether it will ever be cleared up to me, I do not know. However, my plain duty is to wean my mind from the subject, and if possible to avoid pondering over it. . . . I feel that in his way he has a regard for me; a regard which I cannot bring myself entirely to reciprocate in kind, and yet its withdrawal leaves a painful blank. I have just got your note. Above, you have all the account of my visitor. I dare not aver that your kind wish that the visit would yield me more pleasure than pain has been fulfilled. Something at my heart aches and gnaws drearily. But I must cultivate fortitude.

Thank you for your kind note. It was kind of you to write it, though it *was* your school-day. I never knew you to let a slight impediment stand in your way when doing a friendly action. Certainly I shall not soon forget last Friday, and never, I think, the evening and night succeeding that morning and afternoon. Evils seldom come singly, and soon after X—was gone papa grew much worse. He

went to bed early. Was sick and ill for an hour, and when at last he began to doze and I left him, I came down to the dining-room with a sense of weight, fear, and desolation hard to express and harder to endure. A wish that you were with me did cross my mind; but I repelled it as a most selfish wish. Indeed it was only short-lived; my natural tendency in moments of this sort is to get through the struggle alone; to think that one is burdening others makes all worse. You speak to me in soft, consolatory accents; but I hold far sterner language to myself, dear Nell. An absence of five years; a dividing expanse of three oceans; the wide difference between a man's active career and a woman's passive existence. These things are almost equivalent to a lifelong separation. But there is another thing which forms a barrier more difficult to pass than any of these. Would X—and I ever suit? Could I ever feel for him enough love to accept of him as a husband? Friendship, gratitude, esteem, I have; but each moment that he came near me, and that I could see his eyes fastened upon me, my veins ran ice. Now that he is away I feel far more gently towards him; it is only close by that I grow rigid, stiffening with a strange mixture of apprehension and anger which nothing softens but his retreat and a perfect subsiding of his manner. I did not want to be proud nor intend to be proud, but I was forced to be so. Most true is it that we are overruled by One above us, that in His hands our very will is as clay in the hands of the Potter.

I trust papa is not worse; but he varies. He has never been down to breakfast but once since you left. The circumstance of having him to think about just now is good for me in one way; it keeps my thoughts off other matters which have been complete bitterness and ashes; for I do assure you a more entire crumbling away of a seeming foundation of support and prospect of hope than that which I allude to can scarcely be realized.

I have heard from X— to-day, a quiet little note. He returned to London a week since on Saturday. He leaves England next month. His note concludes with asking whether he has any chance of seeing me in London before that time. I must tell him that I have already fixed June for my visit, and, therefore, in all human probability we shall see each other no more. There is still a want of plain, mutual understanding in this business, and there is sadness and pain in more ways than one. My conscience, I can truly say, does not now accuse me of having treated X— with injustice or unkindness. What I once did wrong in this way I have endeavored to remedy both to himself and in speaking of him to others. I am sure he has estimable and sterling qualities; but with every disposition—with every wish—with every intention even to look on him in the most favorable point of view at his last visit,

it was impossible for me in my inmost heart to think of him as one that might one day be acceptable as a husband . . . No, if X— be the only husband fate offers to me, single I must always remain. But yet at times I grieve for him; and perhaps it is superfluous, for I cannot think he will suffer much—a hard nature, occupation, change of scene will befriend him.

I have had a long, kind letter from Miss Martineau lately. She says she is well and happy. Also I have had a very long letter from Mr. —, the first for many weeks. He speaks of X— with much respect and regret, and says he will be greatly missed by many friends. I discover with some surprise that papa has taken a decided liking to X—. The marked kindness of his manner to him when he bade him good-bye, exhorting him to be "true to himself, his country, and his God," and wishing him all good wishes, struck me with some astonishment at the time; and whenever he has alluded to him since, it has been with significant eulogy. . . . You say papa has penetration. On this subject I believe he has indeed. I have told him nothing, yet he seems to be *au fait* to the whole business. I could think at some moments his guesses go further than mine. I believe he thinks a prospective union, deferred for five years, with such a decorous, reliable personage, would be a very proper and advisable affair. However I ask no questions, and he asks me none; and if he did I should have nothing to tell him.

The summer following this affair of the heart witnessed another visit to London, where she heard Mr. Thackeray's lectures on the humorists. How she enjoyed listening to her idol, in one of his best moods, need not be told. Some there are still living who remember that first lecture, when all London had assembled to listen to the author of "Vanity Fair," and the rumor suddenly ran round the room that the author of "Jane Eyre" was among the audience. Men and women were at fault at first, in their efforts to distinguish "Curer Bell" in that brilliant company of literary and social notabilities; but at last she was discovered hiding under the motherly wing of a chaperon, timid, blushing, but excited and pleased—not at the attention she herself attracted, but at the treat she had in prospect. One or two gentlemen sought and obtained introductions to her—amongst them Lord Carlisle and Mr. Monckton Milnes. They were not particularly impressed by the appearance or the speech of the parson's daughter. Her person was insignificant, her dress somewhat rustic, her language quaintly precise and formal, her manner odd and constrained. Altogether this was

a woman whom even London could not lionize ; somebody outwardly altogether too plain, simple, unpretending, to admit of hero-worship. Within there was, as we know, something entirely exceptional and extraordinary ; but, like Lucy Snowe, she still kept her real self hidden under a veil which no casual friend or chance acquaintance was allowed to lift. It was but a brief visit to the "Big Babylon," and then back to Haworth, to loneliness and duty ! In July, 1851, she writes from the parsonage to one of her friends as follows : —

My first feeling on receiving your note was one of disappointment, but a little consideration sufficed to show me that "all was for the best." In truth it was a great piece of extravagance on my part to ask you and Ellen together ; it is much better to divide such good things. To have your visit in prospect will console me when hers is in retrospect. Not that I mean to yield to the weakness of clinging dependently to the society of friends, however dear ; but still as an occasional treat I must value and even seek such society as a necessary of life. Let me know then whenever it suits your convenience to come to Haworth, and, unless some change I cannot now foresee occurs, a ready and warm welcome will await you. Should there be any cause rendering it desirable to defer the visit, I will tell you frankly. The pleasures of society I cannot offer you ; nor those of fine scenery. But I place very much at your command — the moors, some books, a series of quiet "curling-hair-times," and an old pupil into the bargain. Ellen may have told you that I spent a month in London this summer. When you come you shall ask what questions you like on that point, and I will answer to the best of my stammering ability. Do not press me much on the subject of the "Crystal Palace." I went there five times, and certainly saw some interesting things, and the *coup d'œil* is striking and bewildering enough. But I never was able to get up any raptures on the subject, and each renewed visit was made under coercion rather than my own free will. It is an excessively bustling place ; and after all its wonders appeal too exclusively to the eye, and rarely touch the heart or head. I make an exception to the last assertion in favor of those who possess a large range of scientific knowledge. Once I went with Sir David Brewster, and perceived that he looked on objects with other eyes than mine.

T. WEMYSS REID.

From Good Words.

WHAT SHE CAME THROUGH.

BY SARAH TYTLER,
AUTHOR OF "LADY BELL," ETC.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A DOWAGER LIFE.

THE first thing that Pleasance did at Stone Cross was to extend largely, by means of the instalment of her income with which Mr. Woodcock had furnished her, the purchases that she had made before leaving London, by way of preparation for entering into another sphere. She bought, alike boldly and judiciously, from the principal linen-draper in Stone Cross, what might constitute the simple wardrobe of a lady. But she declined Mrs. Perry's respectful suggestion to send the materials to be made up for her.

"I can make my own clothes, my gowns among the rest, Mrs. Perry, and I suppose there is no objection to my sewing," said Pleasance.

"One of her queer speeches," commented Mrs. Perry to herself ; "but sewing is soothings, they say, and I can fit the things on : I have fitted on for Mrs. Douglas when I was her maid."

Pleasance did not refuse the aid, which, though named by Mrs. Perry with proud humility, was far more available than Lizzie Blennerhasset's.

Pleasance sat in the drab rooms and stitched her heart from breaking and her brain from a fever, and having made the clothes, she put them on and appeared in outward attire like other ladies.

Mrs. Perry could not take it upon her, at the height of her own frenzy, to hinder Pleasance from walking abroad by herself in a place so quiet and so freely frequented by ladies as Stone Cross. Pleasance always came home again, and even paid regard to hours — a watch having been one of her purchases.

At first Pleasance had gone abroad with a vague idea of finding something to do, somebody to aid in her new circumstances. She was a lady in spite of herself, and was no longer at liberty to provide for her own wants. She must find the occupation — alas ! not so unmistakable or so certain of its reward, which she understood was the resource of ladies, that of ministering to their poorer brethren and sisters.

As to ministering to her own household, it was out of the question — they did not seem to need it, and they certainly would not permit it — unless in the single rite of

reading prayers, which Mrs. Perry had formally requested Pleasance to perform.

Pleasance's own household would have none of her ministrations. But surely there were other households that would be glad of those qualities of manual skill and strength on which poor Pleasance had learned to pride herself at the manor farm, and which were now likely to rust for want of employment, and to leave their former possessor as useless a creature in her own eyes, as in those of other people.

But Mrs. Perry, from whom Pleasance solicited information, spoke in perfect accordance with facts when she said, with a mildly resolute shade of reprobation of any project in which the poor should figure, that there were not many poor people about Stone Cross, and such as did exist were looked after and relieved by organized committees of ladies and clergymen.

Pleasance, making an investigation for herself, could see no such wretchedness at Stone Cross as she had relieved in a small way at Saxford; and the poor tradesmen and mechanics of the cathedral town were a totally different class from the rough agricultural laborers.

She was too unused to her present position, too innocently a beggar turned porter, to be possessed of the tact and perseverance which might have disarmed opposition. She relinquished the campaign in despair. "I see that I am condemned to stand and wait like a blind man or a disabled invalid. Perhaps it is a punishment on me for my pride of usefulness which matched my pride of independence. Once I was told that I was the proudest woman in the world," she recalled.

Pleasance pursued her walks for her own personal profit and pleasure. And though she still protested against and lamented over such a waste of life, she was capable of receiving a considerable amount of profit and pleasure from her solitary expeditions.

The cathedral was a consolation to her; and it was so near her, that though the principal sitting-rooms of the house looked perversely into the gloomy grassy walk, she never glanced out of her bedroom window, she never came out of her high iron gate, without confronting the cathedral gates — those gates which had each an old Saxon name, while the arch of one of them was crowned by a triangular building, — chamber or chapel of saint, which seemed to her, by comparison, not so very much smaller than the thatched-roofed, white-washed little church at Saxford. Within, there was first the grammar

school, pinnacled, buttressed, half-draped in green, once a separate chapel. Then there were the hoary tower and massive building of the cathedral itself. She could visit it and linger in it at all hours, until nave, aisles, and choir, and great rose window, cloisters and crypt, were as familiar to her as to beadle or guide, who ceased to pester her, or even to the dean himself, who, in the fashion of the day, was an ardent antiquarian. She took an interest in everything, from the Norman pillars — up to the triforium and the richly-carved roof, and down to the elaborate wood-work of the stalls, and the monumental brasses in the pavement. She studied the tombstones of bishop, lord, and lady, and wondered what life had felt like to them. She questioned what the old monks of the original chapel of St. John's would have made of the troop of merry boys who rushed out of the grammar school. She admired the endless patience of the carvers in wood and stone that had put the finishing touches to the work of the master-builders of the Middle Ages. She did everything save attempt to sketch. She sometimes saw artists sketching this or that vista, or central spot, screen, or canopy. But she smiled at the idea that her random, scrambling pencil sketches which had just succeeded occasionally in catching the primitive outline and expression of a wind-mill or a barge, or "Daisy" or "Jowler," could transfer and make their own of the stately magnificent minor cathedral, which was not only full of all law and science of art, but teeming with symbol and emblem.

After the cathedral, Pleasance liked the close, which she traversed and re-traversed, unconscious that she attracted any observation, since she was neither openly stared at, nor pointed at and jostled, as at Saxford. She held that the ancient, half-ecclesiastical houses, some of which had arched entrances to cloistered and grim courts, were next in interest to the ancient church.

She was fond of strolling about the whole old red town, watching for those green and brown glimpses into wooded and moorland country, which were supplied by its side-streets and lanes, with the effect of gaps in mason-work. She had a special partiality for the ferries and the bridges, which were in fact gateways — one of them with a round tower in addition to the low, but substantial house over its arch — for Stone Cross was built on a river full and slow, like the east country rivers. Pleasance would stand on the

bridges, and look up at the red houses in close proximity to the cool, green water, and fancy these must be similar to bits of German towns of which she had read.

But what Pleasance visited more regularly than the cathedral was the market, in the widest portion of the widest street, with the country stalls, and the country-women seated before them. She did not go there to buy, for the most part; she did not feel as if she belonged to the buyers. She went to gaze at the market-carts and ponyies, the fowls and ducks, butter and eggs, and early vegetables, as if they were so many relics of a lost paradise. She had a great longing to speak to the wives and daughters of the humbler farmers, and who sat there, weatherbeaten, but tidy, even smart in their hats and jackets, with here and there a bright-colored neckerchief or a white apron, as she never experienced a longing to speak to any of the ladies who passed her, sauntering along the pavement. But an ever-increasing shyness was stealing over her. She did not belong to them now, any more than to the others; she belonged to nobody. She did not resent the fate, though it was hard on a woman like her.

When her walks extended into the country near Stone Cross, Pleasance used to stand and watch the field-work for many minutes at a time. Once she did more than watch. A flock of sheep had been driven out of a pen, and the shepherd and his dogs had gone on, driving the main body of the flock, without observing that a straggler remained behind. A lame young sheep had fallen in a rut by the hedgerow, in the long grass of which its legs were entangled; and it lay half hidden and struggling, unable to recover its footing. Pleasance climbed without hesitation over the barrier, and raised and freed the sheep, getting her dress all smeared with the mire which recent rainy weather and the hoof-tread of the sheep had combined to produce. Mrs. Perry was rendered both frightened and fretful by that mud, though Pleasance did not fail to account for it, as she believed satisfactorily.

The adventure got abroad, as most things even distantly concerning the upper ten thousand oozed out in the close circle at Stone Cross in much the same spirit that gossip was rampant at Saxford. It gave rise to the report in certain quarters that the low-born, half-crazy young woman whom Douglas of Shardleigh had been mad to marry, was, in addition to her other demerits, the most masculine of her sex. This was said by the young ladies

who, when the county hunt was in the neighborhood, boasted of being able to ride across country and be in at the death, and who were fain to consider themselves good sportswomen in other respects, since they could wield a rod in a salmon stream and land a panting fish, or fire a pistol at a target, in training for a tournament of doves, at which they hoped to be more than mere complacent spectators.

Pleasance had got all her little possessions, including her old school-books, forwarded by Lizzie from the manor-house. But there was already a small library in Willow House. Pleasance read in it for a time, and enlarged her knowledge of English classics.

Then she bethought herself of modern literature, and began to invest money in new books, and to read in a branch of Mudie's, at the principal bookseller's, and in Smith's at the station, pondering much over the latest tendencies of thought, revealed to her particularly in the novels of the day.

As Pleasance read and read with a world of books for her sole world, she began to entertain and cherish the idea of seeing more of the outer world for herself. Her wings were expanding, her sense of self-reliance increasing, her inclination for change and movement developing. If she could do nothing else, if she belonged to nobody, she might in time, when she was a little older, use the income she possessed to travel, to become even a great traveller like Lady Franklin or Madame Pfeiffer. The project was conditional on Mr. Woodcock's consent, for Pleasance was not without a painful sense of obligation, a feeling that as she was a pensioner on the Shardleigh estate, she must submit to authority, like other pensioners. But she did not think that Mr. Woodcock would prove adverse in this instance, and in the mean time the hope of visiting foreign countries in her own person, and learning to know another life and other manners, was productive of results.

Pleasance took the enterprising step of engaging an elderly Swiss lady who advertised in one of the Stone Cross newspapers, and who was resident in the town for the purpose of giving lessons in French and German to the young daughters of the canons and church dignitaries, to renew the slight acquaintance of Pleasance's youth with the current languages of continental Europe.

If Pleasance had also a lurking hope to gain in Madame Berbier a friend for her

friendliness, she found herself mistaken. Madame Berbier was indeed a citizeness of the world, open to advances and advantages from any quarter; but she was also an exceedingly artificial and affected woman, from whose manifest falseness and egregious conceit Pleasance at once recoiled, and confined herself to the business of the lessons.

In truth "Madame Douglas" was a positive windfall to Madame Berbier, insuring her sundry social attentions from the ladies of the close, who, in the dearth of other entertainment, desired to hear the last report of the proscribed intruder into their ranks, the wife of Archie Douglas, sent to Coventry, and kept out of the way at Stone Cross.

"Mrs. Perry," said Pleasance one day, when the silence of the stony and drab house, and its dearth of animal life, had been more dreary than usual, "don't you keep a cat?"

"No, ma'am, there ain't no rats nor mice," answered Perry, with a drab-like neutrality in her voice; "but if you would care to have a cat, I shall make Perry inquire, and get one for you."

"No, thank you, don't trouble yourself about it," said Pleasance, in a disheartened tone, and she added to herself when Mrs. Perry had left her alone, "the poor beast would feel from home; it would be sure to commit depredations; and Mrs. Perry could not help seeking to keep it in its proper place, till its life became a burden to it."

But Pleasance was tempted by the contents of a bird-seller's shop, and first she bought a cage full of young canaries, carrying them home herself. Then she bought nest after nest of young linnets and goldfinches, taking a melancholy pleasure in letting the birds fly away as soon as they were fully fledged.

At last, passing over a pair of turtle-doves, which the bird-seller pressed upon her, she brought home such a tame young jackdaw as she had seen Ned take out of one of the chimneys of the manor-house, and rear into all imaginable boldness and trickery. "It will live in the tool-house, and it will not do the least harm to the garden," insinuated Pleasance, for she was conscious that though the Perrys were too good servants to contradict her, she had got into disgrace with Mr. Perry on several recent occasions. He had taken to heart her last enfranchisement of native birds, and her begging him to spare the two crows' and the one wood-pigeon's nests in the row of trees beyond the gar-

den. He had been still more wounded by her saying inadvertently, while looking at his worshipped melon-beds, that she had only eaten melon once (Long Dick had brought a melon as an offering from a foreign ship in Cheam harbor), and she did not like it; she thought it tasted like sweetened turnip with a certain sickly flavor superadded.

"Ladies may think as they choose, Perry," his wife had admonished in private. "If our mistress sees fit to turn the drawing-room into a aviary, and that not with love-birds or even parrots, as we have known ladies make pets of, but with common hedge-birds that she could see in the fields any day; and if she chooses to walk about the garden with a nasty sooty daw fluttering and hopping, and caw-cawing after her — even if the vegetables and the fruit should suffer, is no business of ours. It is our part to please her, and a good thing it is that a lady like her, with her ways, is pleased so easy. We have nothing to do to interfere and prevent her going-on."

Notwithstanding Mrs. Perry's excellent advice and her corresponding practice, Perry aimed at Pleasance, behind his wife's back, a few severe reflections "on them wretched little birds, the most cunningest, destructivest creatures in creation," and on the insatiable appetite of even a single pair of wood-pigeons, which rendered Perry's sowing of late peas, or of smaller seed that season an idle farce.

Pleasance appropriated the speeches, without making any remark on their point, for she was acquiring social tactics. She was partly diverted, partly disconcerted; but she preserved her individuality and independence, and she was not deprived of her rights, never openly attacked, only subtly impugned. She kept Jacky and revelled in his forwardness and eccentricity.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE OCCUPANTS OF THE GABLE HOUSE.

WHEN Mrs. Douglas gave Mrs. Perry the instructions which she misinterpreted, the lady had no notion that they would be so thoroughly carried out, as to admit of no reservation.

"Of course her clergyman will call for her," Mrs. Douglas had reflected with regard to her daughter-in-law, "no doubt she will attend either church or chapel; very likely she is a Dissenter, perhaps a Methodist. If she has no higher motive

— I am sure I hope she has — she will at least have been accustomed to go to church or chapel as the chief place for showing off her best clothes, and seeing her neighbors. Her clergyman will be kind to her, and his wife will take a little notice of her; they are bound to look after and do the best they can for any member of their flock, whatever her disadvantages. Her doctor will attend her. That kind of person is always fancying herself ailing, from finding her time hang heavy on her hands, and liking to feel herself of consequence. I daresay she suffers also — let us be charitable — from a new mode of life. Oh! she will soon get quite a little set of her own round her. But it will be far better for her, and for all, that she should not be exposed to overtures — mischievous and malicious — from idle members of our set; though I believe I shall never go near Stone Cross again, and I shall certainly keep Jane from that neighborhood in future." Such had been Mrs. Douglas's expectations, but the sequel did not bear them out.

Pleasance was very healthy, and did not so much as fancy herself ill, or dream of calling in a doctor. As for her clergyman — the incumbent of her parish whom she heard along with the other dignitaries in the cathedral — he did call, and was admitted by Perry, who was also a regular and well-known attendant on his ministrations. After a few friendly words with his elder parishioner, his visit to Pleasance was of the shortest and most cautious description; and his following visits were all on the same model.

Thus Pleasance led an utterly solitary life, with her interest in her neighbors reduced to a casual curiosity. But she grew to know a good many people by sight; and none among the better class attracted her attention more than a family consisting of two ladies, with a large retinue of servants, who occupied the Gable House leading out of the close.

The Gable House shared in many peculiarities of the close architecture, and had undoubtedly been included in the ecclesiastical bounds in its day. It had not figured in a humble capacity, for it was one of the finest old houses — not excepting the deanery — in Stone Cross, with a covered entrance, pointed windows, and a coat of arms carved above the door, which when open afforded a glimpse of a grand old oak staircase.

However, it was not the house, with its venerable stately charm, which fascinated Pleasance, nor was it so much its mis-

tresses in themselves, as an intangible impression that they made on her.

The elder lady was a large, overgrown woman, with handsome, heavy features, who went little abroad even in her carriage, and never without pomp and ceremony, as in the progress of a sovereign. The younger lady, about the age of Pleasance, was the reverse of the elder in looks and deeds. Certainly, she, too, was inclined to be stout, while she was not above the middle height; but it was the description of stoutness which may exist in company with much *verve* and buoyance. There was nothing sleepy about her, except her eyes, when they were not laughing, which was very often. She went a great deal about, and varied her goings in every way, for she seemed her own mistress, in spite of the dictatorial air of her senior. She walked early and late, as if she were in the heat of a match against her *embonpoint*, which, indeed, she was; she rode, and she drove, though she did the latter more rarely. She was accompanied by other girls, she was escorted by troops of men, young and old, or she was alone. In her rich silk, her delicate muslin, her yachting-flannel, her grey camlet, she was forever to be seen playing croquet, sketching in the cathedral, boating on the river, singing in the choir, or visiting the poor as the member of a visiting association.

Yet any one who studied her, might have had a perception that she knew exactly where to stop within certain prescribed limits; and that in a worldly sense she was very well able to take care of herself. Clearly she had established a license for herself. She could do with impunity what other girls like her were not permitted to do. She was even trusted as a person who had experience, and who, with all her bravado, kept safely within conventional barriers.

Pleasance could not tell for a time why she should be — not so much drawn or repelled, as somehow arrested — by the ladies at the Gable House. She was driven to dwell on their characteristics and to try to recall similar traits in people she had known; while all the time her reason told her that she could never have been acquainted with anything like what she saw, in the different world in which she had lived, and that she was setting herself an impossible and unprofitable task.

The explanation came when Pleasance asked Mrs. Perry a few questions which were fully answered.

The one line of conversation in which Mrs. Perry felt at liberty to indulge with her mistress, was the annals of the close and county families. These, like bits out of the *Court Journal* or *Morning Post*, were quite proper topics for discussion, and could not be too much discussed by Mrs. Archie Douglas. If Mrs. Perry had a weakness which rendered her garrulous, it had reference to her familiarity with such histories.

The ladies at the Gable House were Mrs. and Miss Wyndham, the widow and one of the daughters of Mr. Wyndham, of Sefton Hall in the same county. The Gable House belonged to Sefton Hall, just as Willow House belonged to Shardleigh, from which it was much farther removed; but in the old days the cathedral towns were connected, far and near, with the county gentry. Now the only other county house left in Stone Cross was Bridge House, the residence of old Lady Lewis, who was a connection of the family—only she was so very old that she visited nobody.

Miss Wyndham was a beauty, and a very lively young lady. She had known Miss Douglas when the two were children, meeting occasionally at Stone Cross. They had renewed the acquaintance when both families were on the Continent last year; and Miss Wyndham had been up in town, living with Mrs. Douglas in Grosvenor Square, at the beginning of the season.

Mrs. Perry hastened to quit this part of her subject, which her discretion warned her was trenching on dangerous ground.

Mrs. Wyndham had also been a beauty in her day, and was still a fine, big lady. She had been an heiress as well, her father's property having come to her; and there had been mines put down on a bit in Staffordshire which had doubled its value. Yet it had all been needed, for Mr. Wyndham had been a gentleman much given to horse-racing; people said his son took after him; and the other daughter had married into a high but poor foreign family, and it was believed required assistance from her own people in addition to her portion.

Mrs. Perry — of all people to be bitten with diffuseness, conveyed the whole information to Pleasance without the least suspicion that her listener was particularly interested in it.

Yes, Pleasance remembered everything — the name of Sefton Hall, the traits of the aunt, whom Pleasance had seen first and last, when she herself was only a girl

of thirteen years, on the memorable occasion of her leaving the Hayes.

Even the laughing black eyes and mocking mouth of the young lady were the features of which Pleasance had got a glimpse in the companion of Archie Douglas and his sister in that miserable encounter in the Park.

How it had all come round! What a tangled web life was, with the same threads perpetually recurring and crossing each other as Pleasance had said to herself in the hollow of the Saxford moor.

And now she was sitting in the drab-colored drawing-room of Willow House, surrounded by her bird-cages and her books. She was looking out on the dull green walk under the willow-trees, which was nevertheless rendered less depressing by the figure of Jacky walking up and down stealthily in search of a place of concealment for some of his stolen goods, and when he had accomplished his secret deposit, strutting backwards and forwards as if he were a gentleman with his hands beneath his coat-tails. She asked herself what difference could it make to her that her aunt and cousin — save one person, the nearest, nay, the sole relations she had in the world — were dwelling in the same town, within a stone's throw of her, as utterly unconscious of her proximity as she had been of theirs till within the last half-hour. They were probably even more unaware of her existence, for they had never heard of her, as far as she knew, since she was a school-girl; and she had at least made a wild guess at her cousin's identity with the Miss Wyndham of Clem Blennerhasset's story three or four months ago.

As for bearing malice against her cousin, Pleasance was incapable of it. She judged that she and Miss Wyndham were two different beings, brought up in entirely different spheres — for that matter, she could not fancy that in any circumstances she would have resembled Miss Wyndham.

Pleasance had not great sympathy with the other girl's superabundant laughter; and yet she heard the echo of the gaiety wistfully in midst of her own gravity, unbroken nowadays, as she would have looked at a ray of sunshine darting into a shady place. Whatever Rica Wyndham was, she was no hypocrite; and Pleasance, very true herself, turned instinctively to every form of truth in man or woman.

Pleasance had grown so well accustomed to the knowledge of who were the occu-

pants of the Gable House that she had ceased to avoid them — which had been her first impulse — or to feel agitated when they did meet ; and the ladies stared in a modified polite fashion at Pleasance.

One morning when the dog-roses were in blossom, as Pleasance was returning from a country road to which she repaired because it abounded in chickweed and groundsel for her birds, she encountered Miss Wyndham, as the latter would have said, "doing her constitutional" before breakfast.

The road was unfrequented at this hour, when the cousins were about to pass, as Pleasance supposed, without a word ; but she reckoned without her host.

"Good morning, Mrs. Douglas," said Rica Wyndham in ringing tones ; "I see that we are of one mind about rising early and improving the shining hour in this beautiful June weather ; though upon my word I do not see why you should do it."

"I have always risen early," said Pleasance, a little fluttered by her own superior knowledge, but still more tickled by the coolness of the young lady.

"So have not I," said Rica Wyndham ; "I used to enjoy my morning snooze immensely ; all our mesdemoiselles and Fräuleins were at their wits' end to get me up ; but now no more sweet forbidden naps for me. I am forced to be self-denying. I have to get Hastings (your Perry knows her) to rout me out betimes every morning while mamma sleeps the sleep of the just, regardless of her figure, till ten o'clock. I should soon be a monster, and run the risk of ruining my whole prospects in life, if I did the same. Don't you envy the old matrons their privileges ? Oh ! I forgot that you are a matron — the enviable character that all we poor girls are dying to sustain."

Pleasance could not tell whether Rica Wyndham had an intention of being specially impertinent — or whether, being in the habit of laughing at everybody and everything, she could not pull herself up and break herself of the habit, on the instant.

But what Pleasance could not divine was why Miss Wyndham should speak to her now. She had lived without question of greeting in Stone Cross for the last three months. Miss Wyndham had passed her, on an average, three times a day, during the greater portion of that time, without an attempt to make her acquaintance.

If Pleasance had been told that Rica Wyndham — in addition to the species of pride which bade her prove to herself how

little she had been disappointed by finding Archie Douglas disposed of — had wagered, as she was fond of wagering, in contempt of scrupulous people, that she would make the acquaintance, without any formal introduction, of this tabooed, cracked Mrs. Douglas, and would be seen at least once walking and talking with her in the streets of Stone Cross, a light would have been cast on the difficulty.

As it was, Pleasance was not so resentful as she was diverted. Her spirit rose at the notion of an adventure with regard to which she herself, after all, was the holder of the secret that lent the incident all its zest and whimsicality.

"I don't think you look like dying of anything, and least of all of envy," said Pleasance.

"Now, I call that malicious chaff, where-as mine was perfectly innocent," retorted Rica, not at all ruffled, however surprised, by the terms of equality on which the rustic young Mrs. Douglas had met her audacious advances. "Of course it is a sore point with me that I don't appear as if I were pining away ; and I suppose you think envy implies pining. Well, I dare say you are right. Don't you think Stone Cross awfully slow ? I am sure it is the stagnant atmosphere which prevents me from growing small by degrees and beautifully less."

"I don't believe you would choose to be other than what you are," said Pleasance ; "and I don't know about slow places. I have lived in the country all my life. I fear that the country would always be slow in your eyes."

"How plain-spoken you are ! I shall tell everybody that you are dreadfully sarcastic."

"I shall not mind, and I don't think that any other body will mind either."

"You are philosophic as well as sarcastic, — that is taking my trade over my head. But it passes my philosophy to understand how you can find Stone Cross lively — you who do not attend choir practice, or play croquet, or join in any of the mild dissipations of the place, unless, indeed, you call cathedral service a dissipation."

"I should hope that I call it something better," said Pleasance, indignantly, "and I did not say Stone Cross was lively."

"Pray, wherein consisted the liveliness of the coun'ry where you lived ?" pressed Rica Wyndham.

"In honest hard work to do for one's self and one's neighbors," answered Pleasance, without an instant's hesitation, "in

life to be lived thoroughly in sharing familiar joys and sorrows."

"How delightful!" exclaimed Rica ironically, "though I must confess I find necessary exercise—I need a great deal of it—hard enough work, and that if my neighbors would considerably bestow on me the full reversion of their joys, I could dispense with their sorrows. What is your opinion of Banting's system?"

"I never thought about it."

"Humph! very selfish of you; and you call that sharing your neighbor's sorrows! I am afraid, Mrs. Douglas, you are a humbug."

The two young women looked at each other, and laughed, and the laugh established a sort of freemasonry between them.

While they had talked they had come into the town, and Miss Wyndham had not broken off from Pleasance, as Pleasance had half expected. Far from it, Miss Wyndham sauntered on ostentatiously, by Pleasance's side (according to the terms of Rica Wyndham's wager), receiving steadily the brisk fire of glances directed upon the couple by sundry clergymen and matrons of Rica Wyndham's set abroad for early service. She only consented to part with a friendly bow at the gate of Willow House.

From that date Rica Wyndham proclaimed loudly that she had found Mrs. Archie Douglas, instead of being insane, a character, a barn-door wit, as well as a beauty. She said poking fun at her was the last best thing out. She insisted on accosting, and having a small war of words with Pleasance whenever it was possible.

Now it was, "What is your plan for cultivating wild flowers, Mrs. Douglas? Will you impart it to me?"

To which Pleasance would answer, "I have none, unless it be like that of the wise doctor who gave the advice to his patient how to eat celery, he should sprinkle it with salt, and fling it over the left shoulder. I would let wild flowers alone; I do not believe they bear transplanting; certainly they do not repay the pain of the process."

Or it would be from Rica, "Did you ever hear of a quizzing-glass? Lady Lewis still gives that name to her eye-glass. I accuse you of quizzing us all through your spectacles."

From Pleasance, "If I do, I only give what I take, you cannot deny that."

Rica,—conscious that she had raised quite a controversy in the close by her conduct, and that her mother, who could

not in general see harm in what her daughter did, was yet puzzled and disturbed by her last act,—was greatly instigated in place of deterred from the course which she had adopted towards Pleasance.

As for Pleasance, she had her own thoughts of all this odd, fitful intercourse.

CHAPTER XLV.

JANE DOUGLAS COMES TO THE CLOSE.

JANE DOUGLAS was with her friends, the Tuffnells, in the close for the June Stone Cross musical festival, in spite of two facts. Mrs. Douglas had resolved that Jane should never, while she was under her guardianship, revisit Stone Cross; and Jane was an obedient, devoted daughter, with a young girl's implicit reliance on and faith in her mother.

The first explanation was that Archie Douglas had started on a yachting-cruise to Norway and northern Russia.

The second, that Mrs. Douglas, after remaining quietly with Jane at Shardleigh, seeking, according to the elder lady's tactics, to live down her son's great blunder and disaster, had gone in the middle of June to pay an annual visit to a sister in Wales.

This sister, whom Mrs. Douglas described with truth as her favorite sister, especially dear to her, had made a poor marriage with an officer in the army, who possessed little private fortune, and who had been compelled by bad health, while still young, to retire from the service and lay out the price of his commission on the purchase of a sheep-farm in Wales. There he and his family could live simply and cheaply; and there with his subalterns, the shepherds, he could command an employment which was healthful, and which afforded some small return of profit.

Happily, Rhynghally was a beautiful place in a pleasant neighborhood. Other families of small gentry, country clergy, and gentlemen farmers, made common cause to be content with a very moderate endowment of this world's goods, and to assert their gentility rather by refined intelligence and cultivated frugality, than by desperate attempts at outward show and luxury.

Mrs. Douglas had always declared herself—and had really been to some extent—captivated by the unassuming cheerfulness and magnanimity which had prevailed at Rhynghally. She had lamented feelingly that she could not exchange her son's great house at Shardleigh, with its staff

of butler, footmen, grooms, and gardeners, its housekeeper and multiplied maid-servants, its carriages and horses, for another farmhouse *or née* on a Welsh lake, with but a single elderly boy as groom, gardener, and general factotum, a cook and one tidy horsemaid, a one-horse shay of the most primitive description for the elders of the family, and plenty of Welsh ponies for the young people.

So long as Archie and Jane were young, the two, above all Jane, went every summer to Wales with Mrs. Douglas, and spent several happy weeks in what was, to children, Elysium. But as Jane grew older her mother found more and more excuses for making the pilgrimage alone. The limitation was remarkable, since she had, over and over again, volunteered the premature assurance to her sister and brother-in-law that she could know no dearer wish than that there should be a mutual fancy between her poor rich little Jane and her eldest cousin. The latter was the most stalwart and worthy of fellows, who was reading for orders, with no higher destination before him, in the mean time, than that of assisting his old rector in his Welsh parish.

The time had come for Ned to be ordained a deacon, and to act as curate to his rector; but he and his cousin Jane were growing out of acquaintance with each other, it was so long since they had been brought together. Notwithstanding, Mrs. Douglas was as ready as ever to whisper to her sister that it would be a rest to one half of her cares, if ever there should arise anything between Ned and Jane. Only the mother of a girl with a fortune was not like any other happy mother who could do as she would. There was so much interference and counsel from those who considered they had a right to advise; and she could not bear to bring the reproach on herself, far less on her beloved friends, that she had not afforded Jane every opportunity of seeing the world before she decided for herself in the most important step in her life.

Before Mrs. Douglas had gone to Rhyn-gally on this occasion, she had disposed of Jane safely, not on any account at Stone Cross, but in a country-house fully fifty miles away. She had persuaded both herself and Jane that her daughter's visit was absolutely due; and that Jane must deny herself the pleasure of seeing her Welsh relations this year again, in order that she might not disappoint and affront the dear good Russells who had every right to expect their cherished guest.

But Mrs. Douglas had not calculated that one of the dear good Russells was a musical enthusiast, who after she had attended all the major musical festivals of the last two years, had set her heart on not missing the minor festival at Stone Cross, and urgently persuaded her family to go over there for the occasion. "The hotels will be choke full," represented this special pleader, "but we can fall back on Dr. Hynd, who will put us up somehow; and if we cannot dispose of you, Jane, so unceremoniously, you have your old family connection, Lady Lewis, or your friends the Wyndhams, or the Tuffnells in the close to go to. Madame Lemmens Sherrington is to sing; I never heard her in the solo she is to take. Shouldn't you like it, Janet? it would be charming variety for you. There will not be a great choir, still it will be a musical titbit in its way."

The Russells had only been made dimly acquainted with the scandal of Archie Douglas's unfortunate marriage, and could not appeal to Jane for more definite details. They had not even heard that young Mrs. Douglas was gone to reside at Stone Cross. Jane had not forgotten it; she was not a girl of lively imagination, but she had warm, tenacious affections.

Necessarily Jane had become aware that her brother and his wife were separated for the present, but as to the separation being final she had no distinct conception. Loving her brother as she did, lamenting his error, and suffering with him in seeing him a changed man, Jane could not resist nourishing fond visions of atonement and reconciliation, almost as romantic as if she had possessed her mother's and Archie's imaginations.

She had not an older woman's scruple at interfering in a private matter which concerned others so nearly. She had a child's single-heartedness; and she could not resist the temptation of gratifying her intense curiosity, and seeing and judging for herself with regard to her offending yet innocent sister-in-law.

Jane did not imagine that her mother would seriously disapprove the step which she—Jane—was about to take in going to Stone Cross. Mrs. Douglas had not anticipated any chance of Jane's being enticed in that unpropitious direction, and whatever she had decided in her own mind, she had not seen the necessity of making the little cathedral town forbidden ground to her daughter.

Jane really believed that her mother would be thankful after it was over, that

she had gone on an easy natural pretext and made her private observations.

In addition to her other strong impulses, she had a young girl's oddly exaggerated reluctance to hamper her friends, and baulk them in a projected excursion.

Jane had by no means forgiven Rica Wyndham for her gratuitous implications with regard to the scene in the Park, the less so that poor Jane had been forced to acknowledge there had been some truth in the insinuations. Her own and her mother's Archie had not been the Bayard beyond reproach, that Jane had believed and boasted him to be.

In these circumstances she would rather not elect to bestow her company upon Rica Wyndham, though Jane was sure to meet Rica continually during the three days of the festival. She would prefer her close friends the Tuffnells to the Wyndhams, and to her ancient kinswoman, who might lay hold of her and detain her by main force to do honor to the all-important celebration of that ninetieth birthday which had begun to take overpowering proportions in its tottering heroine's dim eyes.

From *The Spectator.*
ZEAL.

BISHOP TEMPLE, with characteristic courage, began his address to the Church Congress on Tuesday by a lively criticism on zeal, as the quality most likely to bring men far from their ordinary duties to attend a heterogeneous meeting, in which the predominance of neither knowledge nor thoughtfulness could be secured,—a quality, too, not necessarily connected with either an earnest love of truth as truth, or the sort of learning and ability best qualified to sift truth from error. And no doubt Dr. Temple is right. Zeal, of the commoner kinds at least, is not often combined with the highest qualities for discriminating truth from error, and is very often indeed combined with a remarkable absence of these qualities. The zeal of the world is apt to be as separable, and too often separated, from the higher moral and intellectual discrimination, as the motive power in the steam-engine from the engineer or engine-driver. The greatest zeal is in one person, the highest power to direct the zeal in another, but the two unfortunately are far too apt to be disconnected. The zealots of old days have not the best reputation in the world, and so far as the desire to make a proselyte is

the characteristic of zeal, they have a very bad reputation; indeed, on the authority of Christ himself, their eager compassing sea and land to make one proselyte has been not only condemned, but said to result in making him "twofold more the child of hell than themselves." If, then, Bishop Temple were at all right in suspecting that it is zeal of this kind which fills Church congresses, he had some reason for his warning that those who attend them are by no means the best representatives of the Church, and may be the representatives of something very different indeed from the Church.

It would be, however, we think, a mistake to confound zeal absolutely with the *animus* of the proselytizer. The evil in the proselytizer is not at all the ardor with which his own convictions fill him, but the ardor for absolutely ruling other minds and hearts with which he so often confounds the desire to make them share his convictions. So long as zeal is limited to the emotion and the action produced by a vivid vision of what seems true, and has its chief effect, so far as regards others, in the effort to share that vision with them, it is not evil, but purely good, and moreover, contains within it the very principle which most tends to moderate and restrain it from excess. For every one who really loves that which has given him life and rest, will be keenly alive to the sort of difficulties with which other minds meet what he has to say, and will be effectually warned in this way of the shortcomings and weak points of the faith which he entertains. Accordingly, in all zeal of the higher and finer kinds we find a certain pliancy and susceptibility to reflex influence from those to whom it addresses itself, which marks the distinction between true enthusiasm and the hard dictatorial urgency of the mere proselytizer. There is nothing rigid about the zeal of St. Paul, or St. Augustine, or Francis of Assisi, or Fénelon, or Hooker, or Butler, or, to come to our own day, Dr. Liddon, or Mr. Martineau, or F. D. Maurice, or John Henry Newman. The object of such zeal as theirs is to inspire in others the vision of the truth which they have themselves felt, and they are always changing their mental attitude,—even restlessly, one might sometimes say,—the moment they perceive that there is anything in the truth as they have uttered it which has jarred on the spirit of those to whom they have addressed themselves, and brought out, instead of the tones it had to their own ear, some discord of the soul. What zeal of

this kind really aims at, is not to get a spiritual instrument, but to awaken the same intense conviction in another; they who feel it do not hold that they have succeeded if they fall short of this, and the very fact that they do fall short of this makes them humble, and disposed to reconsider the elements of their own conviction. The zealot of the proselytizing kind is a very different person. What he aims at is not to produce the inward vision which he himself has,—indeed, not unfrequently he has none,—but to sweep arbitrarily away that disturbing resistance to his own self-confidence which makes him vaguely uneasy, as he would be uneasy if he found the foundations of his house quaking, or his feet sinking in a quicksand. What true zeal tries to remedy by recurring to its own inward vision of truth, and regaining the light and peace which that vision originally gave, the zealot tries to remedy by getting rid, if possible, of the external occasion for uneasiness,—by removing the unpleasant reminder of his own fallibility. Whenever a controversialist begins to hector,—to frighten his opponent away from his positions, instead of really entering into them and showing their shortcomings,—we may be sure that he is doing in a shallow and perfunctory way just what the persecutor does in a more thorough way, when he says at once that the uncomfortable opinion had better be put out of the way, by putting out of the way him who holds it. The zealot cares—not for restoring the vision of truth to the mind which has lost it, but for the power of saying that no one openly rebels against it, that “order reigns,” that is, that others outwardly respect the order which the zealot himself believes that he inwardly respects. Thus, the zeal which means intrinsic love of the truth, and the zeal which means irritation and impatience against every one who questions it, are not only essentially different, but result in action of an utterly opposite kind.

With regard to zeal of the finer and nobler kind, we believe that it is not only compatible with a very high sifting and discriminating power, but that the highest sifting and discriminating power cannot exist at all without it. It is a mistake to suppose that cold, calm minds are the best fitted to discriminate truth, just as it is a mistake to suppose that cold, calm minds are the best fitted to discriminate beauty, and for exactly the same reason. Cold, calm minds unquestionably judge better on what they have before them, than eager

and impulsive minds which have precisely the same materials before them. But then they so seldom have the same materials before them. The liability to passion or affection is a power as well as a source of weakness; it brings new materials within the scope of the judgment, and new materials of the most important kind. The commonplace man does not *see* the same sights as the painter whose mind is filled with the love of beauty. The calm, critical intellect does not behold the same vision as the mystic whose heart is full of the love of God. Zeal in the highest sense,—the zeal which comes of true vision and the love of that vision,—is quite as much a discerning power as a motive power. It is only zeal of the lower kind, the zeal which cannot endure the contradiction of particular prejudices, which is a motive power essentially and chiefly, and a very mischievous motive power, too. At the same time, it must be admitted that zeal even of the higher kind is sometimes but badly furnished with that critical and discriminating learning which would be most useful in guarding it from the mistake of confusing between the insight of the spirit and the set of intellectual conclusions which are most commonly associated with that insight. Zeal of the best sort has a fine discrimination of its own, but it often mistakes greatly the limits of that discrimination, and trusts to it in spheres with which it has really no competence to deal. Still we are fully persuaded of this,—that zeal as distinguished from zealotry,—the passion which the vision of truth itself inspires,—has a humane pliancy, an intellectual adaptability of its own, which is a very great safeguard against bigotry of any kind. Undoubtedly, however, zeal of this sort is very much rarer than zealotry,—very much rarer than impatience of contradiction in that special sphere of prejudice which has got on it the conventional mark of “sacredness.” We fear Bishop Temple is right that it is the latter zeal which chiefly fills Church congresses and denominational gatherings of all sorts, and that it is a sort of zeal generally much more dangerous than beneficial. Perhaps, however, even that is better than complete indifference, to which zeal is often much more closely allied than the sometimes diametrically opposite external results which zealotry and indifference produce, would give any idea of. For occasionally we have an opportunity of seeing how cruel indifference can be,—as cruel as the zeal of the zealot, though it seems

much less gloomy, and has much less excuse.

From The Liberal Review.
QUIET GIRLS.

IT would be affectation to pretend that admiration when it is openly expressed is not very sweet to girls. Extremely few people are above the influence of vanity, and maidens, as a class, are certainly not among those who are. There is no valid reason why they should be condemned upon this account. To wish to be thought well of is a perfectly laudable ambition; indeed it is to be feared that if most persons did not desire to be held in favorable estimation the world would be a very much worse place than it is. The misfortune is that many well-meaning individuals mistake notoriety for admiration, and in so doing are naturally led to indulge in excesses and follies of various kinds. It is to be regretted that this is particularly true so far as regards a number of girls who, lacking knowledge of the world and an insight into human nature, are contaminated when they are thrown into association with young men and women of a certain order. You will see them, in their desire to attract notice, unsteadily balancing themselves upon the line which separates the polite from the unpolite, and coqueting with what public opinion has decided to be naughty. No doubt, their intentions are in most cases perfectly innocent, and if they were not applauded by unprincipled flatterers, who being tinged with badness themselves like to make others the same, they would not continue to indulge in their little indiscretions. Unhappily, they are encouraged to believe that they are favorably distinguishing themselves when they are outraging good taste. There are men who like a girl who talks at a great rate and indulges in those descriptions of sneering and backbiting which are often mistaken for wit. There are conceited snobs who love a young woman ten times as much as they would otherwise do if they see that she treats those whom she does not deem it politic to conciliate with something very much resembling insolence. There are beaux who appreciate the creature who is everlastingly giggling, smirking, posing herself in what she deems picturesque attitudes, and shouting utter nonsense at the top of her voice. Quiet girls see this. They perceive, further, that because they lack what seem to be

supposed to be accomplishments, but which are really social vices, they are ignored. Over and over again are the sweetest-natured as well as the cleverest women stigmatized as dull, stupid, and prim, because they are disinclined to shriek and to show all the teeth in their head to the first male who philanthropically condescends to indicate that he is disposed to look with favor upon them.

Quiet girls may feel the manner in which they are often treated or they may not. It is to be hoped, however, that they have the good sense to perceive that they will gain nothing by attempting to imitate their faster and more gushing sisters. The chances are that if they have the inclination they lack the peculiar talent which will enable them to do so successfully. Thus if they do attempt to be noisy, flippant, and publicly spiteful at the expense of their neighbors the probability is that they will make a bungle of the whole business and end by feeling thoroughly ashamed of themselves. To try to do a discreditable thing and fail is, perhaps, the most bitter of all failures, and this is a fact which should speak emphatically to those quiet girls who are contemplating some audacious step in order to escape from the obscurity in which they hopelessly languish. It may as well be stated that to be a noisy, forward, self-assured member of society it is necessary that a girl shall have no deep feelings upon any subject, that she shall not think upon matters outside the special sphere of her operations, and that she shall have no person's welfare so much at heart as her own. In a word she must neither possess a squeamish taste nor a tender conscience. Now, hosts of quiet girls are burdened with those encumbrances; hence, perhaps, their constant humiliation. If you want to find a girl who is a treasure in the home in which she lives; who does real, honest, substantial work; who possesses the strongest affection of those who thoroughly know and understand her; and who is endowed with as noble a soul as she has a pure mind, look for a quiet girl. It is from the ranks of the quiet girls that the best wives, and the truest friends, and the hardest workers come. Of the women who really distinguish themselves by their intellectual achievements the majority are subdued and modest—yet lively and pleasant enough if properly approached—in company. Often treasures, the existence of which has been unsuspected, have been revealed in quiet girls. It always will be so; for a genuine woman will never show

the sterling stuff of which she is made to the first impudent inquisitor, who may be unworthy alike of her confidence and her regard. She will continue to astonish those who pretend to understand her by rising to heights, when she is summoned thither, which are unapproachable to her complacent and courted critics. Yet, in spite of all this, it may happen that quiet girls of the best type may lack the wit, the adaptability to that with which they have no sympathy, the glibness, and that unlimited faith in themselves which must be possessed by those who desire to attract the notice of the more shallow portion of society. The truth is that the noisy girl is as much the product of education and training as anything else, and it may as well be frankly admitted that in her own horrible way she is unapproachable.

We do not wish to be misunderstood. We have no desire to imply that all quiet girls are endowed with genius and the virtues, for some are simply fools who would be noisy enough if they could find anything to say. What we do protest against is the habit which prevails of slighting quiet girls and speaking ill of them before they have been fairly tried, and of paying sickening homage to the concealed chitterboxes of little moral sense and principle. What we would indicate is that while noisy damsels will often turn out to be gaudy impostors, many quiet ones will amply repay the time, trouble, and love which any one may bestow upon them.

From *The Spectator.*
THE PLANET VULCAN.

DURING the last few weeks, attention has been directed afresh to the planet which, seventeen years ago, the French doctor, Lescarbault, was said to have discovered. For years none saw any trace of it, and it seemed about to take its place among astronomical myths, like the rings of Uranus, the satellite of Venus, and the second moon of our earth (seen by Petit, of Toulouse, but usually escaping discovery, because concealed by the earth's shadow). Other objects which had held an apparently more secure position, as the second moon of Neptune, and the four extra satellites of Uranus, which Sir W. Herschel supposed he had discovered, have quite recently been dismissed from our text-books of astronomy, where they had long been recorded without any expression of doubt or suspicion. We our-

selves, who write, had done battle for the Uranian satellites, trusting in Sir W. Herschel's care and customary accuracy; but there can be now no question that these satellites no more exist than the ring which the forty-feet reflector of the great astronomer seemed to show round Uranus. As for the satellite of Venus, though few now suppose the planet has any attendant, such faith was once placed in its existence, that Frederick the Great proposed to give to it the name of his illustrious friend D'Alembert. It does not appear from D'Alembert's reply that he doubted the reality of that astronomical phantasm. "Your Majesty," he said, "does me too much honor, in wishing to baptize this new planet with my name. I am not great enough to become the satellite of Venus in the heavens, nor young enough to be so on the earth. I know too well how small a place I occupy in this lower world to covet one in the sky." To this day, French writers on astronomy regard the question as undecided, and it was but a month or so ago that the Abbé Moigno devoted several pages of his journal, *Les Mondes*, to consider the evidence for and against that mysterious attendant upon the planet of love.

The case of Vulcan is somewhat different. If Venus has a satellite, the smaller body cannot usually be concealed behind the planet, or (lying between the planet and us) be lost to view upon her disc. Therefore, the satellite should have been seen thousands of times by the hundreds of observers who have studied Venus, whereas there have been but twenty or thirty observations of the supposed satellite. But if there is really a planet travelling nearer to the sun than Mercury, we should only expect to see this planet on very rare occasions. During total eclipse it might be seen, and indeed, as Sir J. Herschel said, it ought long since to have been seen during eclipse, if it has any real existence. When passing between the sun and the earth, too, it would sometimes pass across the sun's face, like Venus in transit; and for the same reasons which render transits of Mercury far more common than transits of Venus, transits of Vulcan would be far more common than transits of Mercury. It was during a transit, if Lescarbault's account be correct, that Vulcan was seen by him seventeen years ago, and news recently received from China respecting the planet describe another passage which Vulcan is said to have made across the face of the sun.

The account given by Lescarbault in

1859 was not altogether satisfactory; the principal flaw has not hitherto, we believe, been noticed, except very passingly. Leverrier published in the latter half of that year the result of his investigation of the motions of Mercury, and at the close of his paper expressed the opinion that either Venus must be heavier by one-tenth than had been supposed, or else there must be a planet within the orbit of Mercury disturbing Mercury's movements. On this, Lescarbault announced that nine months before, namely, on March 26th, 1859, he had observed the passage of a round, black body across the face of the sun, which he thought might be the body whose existence was suspected by Leverrier. But he said he did not like to announce its discovery until he had seen it again. Considering how many years had elapsed during which the sun had been constantly observed by astronomers without this planet being seen, the chance of Lescarbault's securing a second view should have seemed so small, that one cannot well understand his reticence. This seems to have been Leverrier's opinion at the time. In "calling at the residence of the modest and unobtrusive practitioner, Leverrier said to him, in an abrupt and authoritative tone, 'It is, then, you, sir, who pretend to have discovered the intra-Mercurial planet, and who have committed the grave offence of keeping your observation secret for nine months. I warn you that I have come here with the intention of doing justice to your pretensions, and of demonstrating that you have been either dishonest or deceived. Tell me unequivocally what you have seen.'" This abrupt address, which in England would probably have led to the visitor's descending from the observatory much more abruptly even than he had entered it, seems to have been met very calmly by Lescarbault, who succeeded in satisfying Leverrier that an inter-Mercurial planet had really been observed. "Leverrier congratulated the medical practitioner upon his discovery, and left with the intention of making the facts thus obtained the subject of fresh calculations."

Three years after Lescarbault's observation, viz., on March 20, 1862, Mr. Loomis, of Manchester, saw a round spot on the sun's face. He called a friend's attention to it, and both remarked its sharp, circular form. Unfortunately business duties only allowed him to watch the spot for twenty minutes, during which time he found that it changed considerably in position. He wrote to Mr. Hind, who made

the observation the subject of a calculation, and two French mathematicians showed that Loomis's results could be reconciled with Lescarbault's, on the assumption that they had both seen the same planet. One cannot but regret that the idea did not occur to Mr. Loomis of forwarding a telegram to Greenwich Observatory. Or, if he were unwilling to do this, he might have sent a messenger to one of the many persons who have observatories in and around Manchester. As Loomis's telescope was only a small one (less than three inches in aperture), he could hardly have failed to know of half-a-dozen persons provided with at least equal telescopic power, and residing within a half-hour's journey of his place of business.

A similar remark cannot certainly be applied to the observation last made upon this mysterious planet, seeing that the observer, M. Weber, was in Pe-chee-lee, when he saw the spot on the sun, and may be forgiven for not telegraphing to Madras or Melbourne, the nearest well-provided observatories. The news reached Europe by post. "It will interest you," wrote M. Wolf to Leverrier, on the receipt of Weber's letter, "to know that on April 4, at half past four Berlin time, M. Weber saw, at Peckeloh, a round spot on the sun, which was without spots in the morning and on the next day, as seen not only by M. Weber, but by myself and M. Schmidt at Athens." Wolf adds, with natural satisfaction, that the interval between Lescarbault's observation and Weber's amounts to exactly one hundred and forty eight times the period which he had himself assigned to Lescarbault's planet. Lescarbault was not so well pleased as might have been expected with Weber's observation. It appears that during the late war the Germans plundered his library and observatory, and having discovered the place where his instruments were concealed, destroyed them. "I should, therefore, have preferred," he says, "since I myself have failed to find Vulcan again, that either a Frenchman or a non-German foreigner had made the discovery." He admitted, however, that he was under obligation to M. Weber.

So satisfactory was Weber's observation considered, that on the strength of it M. Leverrier made fresh calculations, and it was presently announced to the world that probably Vulcan would again cross the sun's face on October 2nd or 3rd. Waiting to hear from colonial observers whether anything remarkable was seen on those days, we may be permitted to call

attention to an observation made at Madrid about five hours before Weber observed his round spot. On April 3, as Weber, Wolf, and Schmidt agree, there were no spots on the sun's face, and such was the experience also of the director of the Madrid Observatory. On April 5, again, he found the sun's face clear of spots. But on the 4th, in the morning, there was a small oval spot, of the kind sometimes seen, showing a nucleus only, without penumbral fringe (*por el nuclo, sin penumbra*). It was clearly seen (*se observaba muy bien*). We might suppose that this was Vulcan (though Vulcan has no right to an oval shape), but for one circumstance, which shows that the spot was on the surface of the sun; there was a small facula (or bright streak) on one side of the spot (*una facula pequena por el lado*). May we not see in such a phenomenon as this the explanation of, at least, those supposed observations of Vulcan in which all that the observer noted was that a round spot, seen at one hour, had disappeared a few hours later? Lescarbault's observation cannot, indeed, be thus explained. But Liais, a French observer of repute, who was studying the sun at Brazil during a part of the time when Lescarbault says he saw Vulcan, asserts that at that time, with a much more powerful telescope, he saw no such spot. It certainly would seem that at present astronomers have hardly sufficient reason for adding Vulcan to the list of known planets.

From Notes and Queries.
HIGHWAYMEN IN PARTNERSHIP.

As an oasis in the desert is the following droll case in the heart of a learned legal treatise. I have just lighted upon it, and note it as an illustration of the, in a twofold sense, amenities of the law, — of the “*locos latos et amana vireta*” *juris*, and of the considerate and delicate euphemism to which the legal mind can, when need is, condescend. *Everet v. Williams*, (2 Pothier on Obligations, by Evans, p. 3, note, citing *Europ. Mag.*, 1787, vol ii, p. 360) is said to have been a suit instituted

by one highwayman against another for an account of their plunder. The bill stated that the plaintiff was skilled in dealing in several commodities, such as plate, rings, watches, etc.; that the defendant applied to him to become a partner, and that they entered into a partnership, and it was agreed they should equally provide all sorts of necessaries, such as horses, saddles, bridles, and equally bear all expenses on the roads and at inns, taverns, alehouses, markets, and fairs; that the plaintiff and the defendant proceeded jointly in the said business with good success on Hounslow Heath, where they dealt with a gentleman for a gold watch, and afterwards the defendant told the plaintiff that Finchley, in the county of Middlesex, was a good and convenient place to deal in, and that commodities were very plenty at Finchley, and it would be almost all clear gain to them; that they went accordingly, and dealt with several gentlemen for divers watches, rings, swords, canes, hats, cloaks, horses, bridles, saddles, and other things; that about a month afterwards the defendant informed the plaintiff that there was a gentleman at Blackheath who had a good horse, saddle, bridle, watch, sword, cane, and other things to dispose of, which he believed might be had for little or no money; that they accordingly went and met with the said gentleman, and, after some small discourse, they dealt for the said horse, etc.; that the plaintiff and the defendant continued their joint dealings together until Michaelmas, and dealt together at several places, viz., at Bagshot, Salisbury, Hampstead, and elsewhere, to the amount of 2,000*l.* and upwards. The rest of the bill was in the ordinary form for a partnership account. The bill is said to have been dismissed, with costs to be paid by the counsel who signed it, and the solicitors for the plaintiff were attached and fined 50*l.* apiece. The case is said to have come before the courts in the early part of the last century, and to have been referred to by Lord Kenyon; “but there is some doubt whether it actually occurred.” (Lindley on Partnership, third ed.)

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